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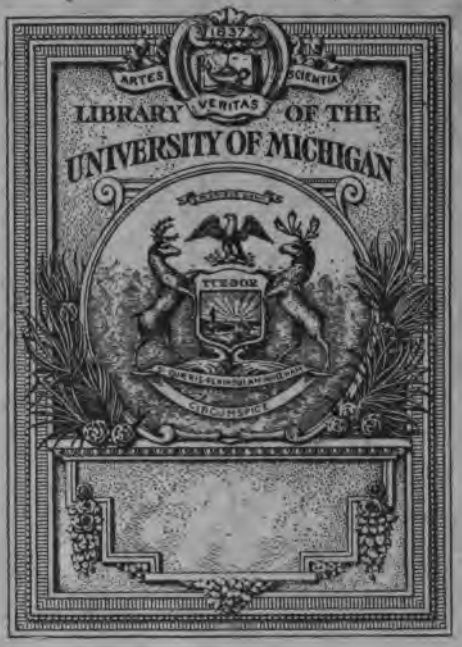
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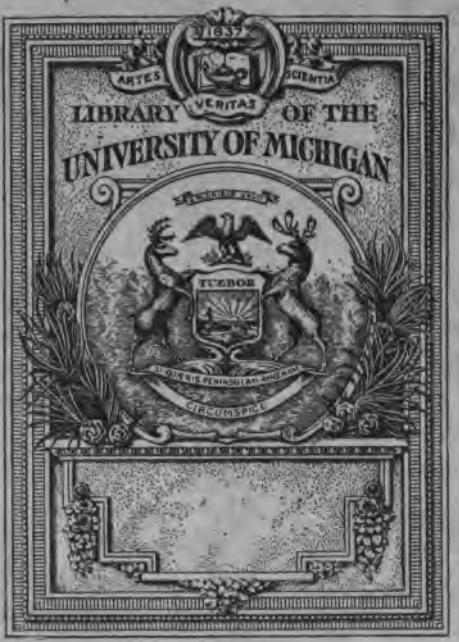
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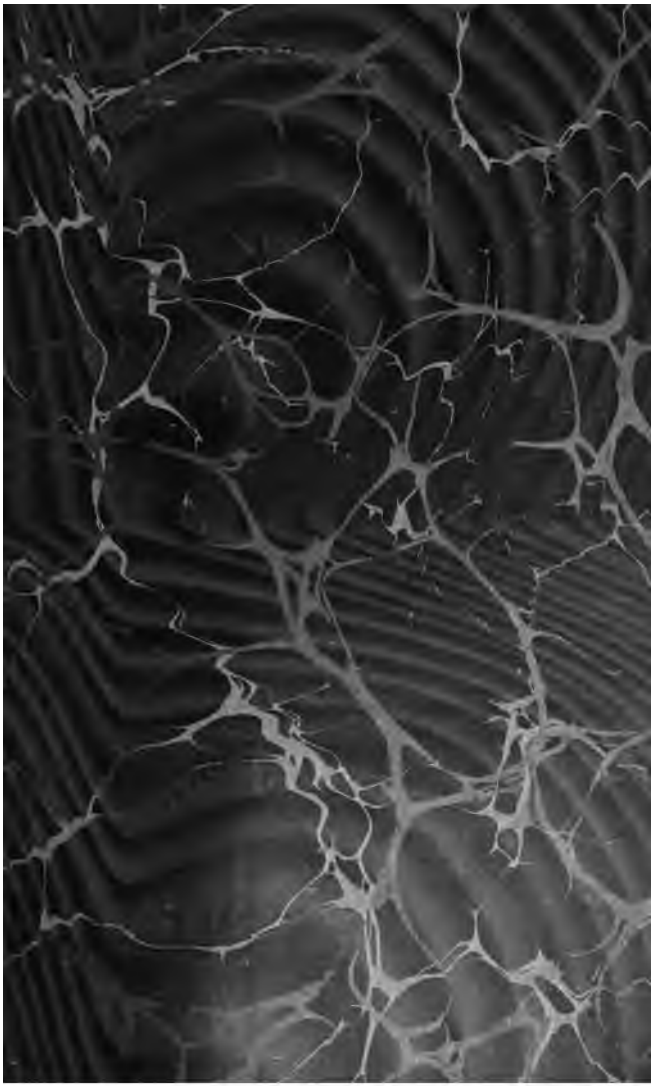

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CARPENTERIANA.

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SKETCH

OF THE

LIFE AND WRITINGS

OF

CHARPENTIER.

FRANCIS CHARPENTIER, Dean of the French Academy, was born at Paris in 1620. His early discovery of quick parts determined his relations to bring him up to the bar. He preferred the quiet of a closet, and the study of languages and antiquities, to the tumultuous practice of the law. When Colbert became minister of state, he projected an establishment of a French East India Company, and thought

that a Discourse published on the subject would serve to recommend the design. He ordered Charpentier to draw one up; with which he was so much satisfied, that he retained him in his family. Colbert, acquainted with the erudition of Charpentier, placed him in the new Academy, afterwards called by the name of "Inscriptions and Medals;" and Charpentier justified the appointment by the care and knowledge he exhibited in that place; for to him is ascribed that noble series of medals struck on various occasions in the reign of Lewis XIV. Charpentier's chief works are, the Life of Socrates, printed in the year 1650; to which he added a French translation of Xenophon's Memorabilia. In the year 1664, he published a Discourse on the establishment of a French East India Company, addressed to the nation at large; and in 1665 an Account of this new establishment, which he dedicated to the King. He took a considerable and successful part in the disputes, whether public monumental inscriptions should be written in French or Latin, under the title of a

Defence of the Propriety of the French Language, and another on the Excellency of that Language. Charpentier died in April 1702, being 82 years of age. His Harangues and Discourses delivered before the Academy, and those addressed to the King, are extant in the Collections of the Academy of Inscriptions, &c. and exhibit great powers of eloquence.

CARPENTERIANA.

TURKISH LITERATURE.

THE Turks can boast several general histories and particular accounts of their country, from the reign of the Sultan Osman, their first Emperor, to the present times. The common opinion is, that the Turks neglect the sciences; yet the library of the Grand Signior is no small part of his treasures. There are pensioned historians in that country, who report with great care and correctness the actions and victories of their sovereigns. The Turks have a famous history entitled "The History of Kings." It is written in Persian verse, and contains the history of the ancient kings of Persia. The author's name was Ferdous; who though a plain peasant, had so great a talent for poetry,

that he gained an high reputation through the East for his genius. The King of Persia, under whose reign he lived, was so delighted with his work, that for each distich he gave the poet a piece of gold. The work contains 60,000 distichs; and as the book is enriched with several portraits, a copy costs more than an hundred crowns. In the French King's library there were several editions of the general histories of Turkey, from which little has been taken, except the meagre annals of Leunclavius.

SOCRATES

Used to say, that he had rather inscribe his sentiments in the hearts of men than on the skins of animals. But surely this wish would confine their utility to his neighbours. On the contrary, it seems the duty of a philosopher not only to exert his wisdom for the benefit of the age in which he lives, but to transmit his instructions to posterity. He should, therefore, by committing them to writing, make them pass into the hearts of all his acquaintance, strangers, and future ages.

AUGUSTUS,

Who loved Virgil and Horace, invited them frequently to his table, and used to place himself between the two poets. Virgil was asthmatic, and Horace had weak eyes. The Emperor used to say, jestingly, alluding to his situation between these two invalids, "Ego sum inter suspiria et lacrymas," my life is passed between sighs and tears.

MODERN POETS.

M. Perrault with justice finds fault with our modern bards, for their too frequent use of fable (mythology) in their works; especially in those which are addressed to the fair sex. But he is wrong in the censure he casts on the ancients; and in saying that the ladies, to whom Ovid addressed his love-letters, must have been very learned to be able to understand them. For those things which to us are matters of erudition, and which cost us some pains to understand, in the ancient writings, were of common notoriety at the time they were

published. Those fabulous allusions made a part of their religious knowledge. There was not a maid-servant at Rome who did not know that Mars was the god of war, Venus the goddess of love, &c. &c.

OBSCURITY OF STYLE.

I cannot give credit to writers for intelligence, if they are to me unintelligible. Quintilian has observed, that a bad writer will be proportionably an obscure one. "Erit ergo etiam obscurior, quo quisque deterior." Of conversation, the greatest defect in my opinion is want of perspicuity; for we talk on purpose to be understood. But as every fault in writing or speaking has its defenders, Quintilian informs us, that in the time of Titus Livius, there was a teacher of rhetoric so great a partisan in favour of obscurity, that he used to advise his scholars to study it; and made them in their compositions correct as errors, those passages which carried with them the greatest perspicuity. He adds, that the highest praise of eloquence that school aspired to, was to be unintelligible. "Tanto

melior, ne ego quidem intellexi." Book viii. cap. 2. Instit. Quinct. Lycophron was of the same opinion: he publicly declared he would hang himself, if any one was found who could understand his poem, The Prophecy of Cassandra. He succeeded to his wishes: for this poem has been the stumbling-block to all grammarians, scholiasts and commentators ever since; and still preserves its original character of impenetrable obscurity. Such a kind of work resembles those subterraneous places, where the air is so thick and vapourish, that any light you apply to them is quickly extinguished.

PEDANTS.

"I hate," says Montaigne, "those scholars who can do nothing without their books." In fact, men of this description have no knowledge, but can tell you where some may be found. They serve as *indexes* to good authors. Their conversation will inform you, that in such a passage and chapter of Cicero and Seneca there is a fine thought. Montaigne has observed, with

much truth in the sentiment, and with great beauty of expression, that science is a sceptre in the hands of some men, and a bauble in those of others.

TURKISH SPY.

Paul Marana was born at Milan, and wrote the Turkish Spy. I could develope some particulars of this Spy, if any one would give me some of Cid Hamet, from whom Cervantes says he took his History of Don Quixote; for the two Turks are equally true characters. Every reader must soon discover, that the Turkish Spy is an assumed title, which the writer adopted, that he might detail in an ingenious way the anecdotes of the seventeenth century. The Musulman Mahmut was neither an inhabitant of Constantinople, Aleppo, or Damascus; but the produce of the brain of the most illustrious Signor Paolo Marana. I have the original certificate, signed with his own name, to this work. It runs thus: "I, the undersigned Paolo Marana, author of a MS. in the Italian language, called l'Esploratore Turco, tomo

terzo, do acknowledge that M. Charpentier, deputed by my Lord Chancellor for the revision of the said MS. has granted me a certificate to permit me to publish the said MS. on condition of expunging certain passages. Dated September 28, 1686."

INSTANCE OF SPANISH GRANDEUR.

A certain Knight of Spain, as high in birth as a King, as catholic as the Pope, and equal to Job in poverty, arriving one night at an inn in France, knocked a long time at the gate, till he had alarmed the landlord. "Who is there?" said the host, looking out of the window. "Don Juan Pedro," replied the Spaniard, "Hernandez, Rodriguez de Villanova, Count of Malafra, Knight Santiago and Alcantura."—"I am very sorry," replied the landlord, shutting the window; "but I have not rooms enough in my house for all those gentlemen you have mentioned."

P. ARETIN.

The Italians style this author "il divino Aretino," the divine Aretin, in compliment

to the splendour and energy of his composition and expressions. He called himself The Scourge of Princes, and caused a medal to be struck, on which he is represented as sitting on a throne, and Kings lying at his feet, who offer him presents; and on the edges of the coin was this inscription: "I Principi tributarii dell' Aretino." Charles V. returning from his unsuccessful expedition into Africa, sent Aretin a chain of gold worth an hundred ducats. "A very small present this," observed the satyrist, "considering the Emperor's late enormous follies."

LOVE OF SCRIBBLING.

The Abbé de Marolles was so fond of being an author, that he put the catalogue of the names of his friends and their acquaintance to the press at his own expence, as he did all his works, which the booksellers would have been unwilling to have undergone any risk in publishing at their venture. M. Marolles said to a friend, that his verses cost him very little. "They cost you as much as they are worth, then,"

replied M. Liguiere. M. Menage wrote on a copy of a translation of Martial's Epigrams published by Marolles, "Epigrams *against* Martial."

HISTORY OF PAINTERS, BY VASARI.

Georgio Vasari appears to have been, as far as I can judge from his writings, a good sort of man, and very liberal of his praises to every one, especially his countrymen the Florentines. All their works are prodigies. We should therefore be cautious of admitting these praises, unless we have examined the works of the painters themselves. No artist ever used more industry than Vasari to arrive at eminence in his profession. He copied all the works of Michael Angelo, in hopes of catching his manner; but, in spite of all the exertions he made, his skill as a painter is very moderate. His fame must depend on his pen, and not on his pencil. In the usage of the former, as it appears to me, he has shewn a great knowledge of the theory of painting, and a just taste for all the fine arts.

PETER BOURDELOT

Was a physician, and the same person whom Christina Queen of Sweden, who did not like to be ignorant of any thing, chose in a laughing way to be her master in swearing, as Bourdelot was reckoned the most expert man of his time in this sort of ejaculations. His conversation was very amusing, and he was a sayer of good things. The Duke of *** sent him some game from Chantilly; and Bourdelot addressed him with the following verses in return:

On te va bien louer, généreux Duc d'Anguien,
Prince doux et charmant, qui fais toujours du bien,
Qui fais voir plus d'esprit que tout ce qui respire.
Orphée est de retour; il chante, et fait des vers;
C'est le grand Bourdelot que tout le monde admire;
Il a déjà tiré des ames des Enfers,
Et déjà le gibier vient au ton de sa lyre.

In vain the muse, my Lord, essays
To give you the due meed of praise.
Alike you shine, whate'er your part,
The able head, or gen'rous heart!
See Orpheus, of melodious fame,
Taking my office and my name;
Again from the sad Stygian coast
Recalls the pale and fleeting ghost,
And, lo! enamour'd of his strain,
Wild beasts approach the bard again.

MOLIERE'S LEARNED LADIES.

In this play the poet introduced the literary company who used to frequent the house of Madame Rambouillet, where formerly he had frequent access. But resenting the raillery of Menage and Cotin, he never appeared there any more. In revenge he introduced these two learned men under the names of Trissotin and Vadius. The quarrel between them in this play*, it is said, the poet founded on a true story, relating to a dispute between Menage and Cotin. On returning from

* Learned Ladies, Act III. Scene 3.

the representation of the Learned Ladies, Madame Rambouillet said to M. Menage, with great indignation, "What! will you suffer this fellow to expose us thus to ridicule?"—"We had better be silent, Madam," replied Menage; "the play is superior to criticism, and there is a great deal of truth in the representation."

WORKS OF FANCY.

Persons who are employed on works of imagination must often be unequal to themselves. For the powers of fancy are subject to much variation, and depend on circumstances that chance as much as nature creates and directs. "I have seen" says Annibal Caracci, "Tintoret sometimes equal to Titian, and sometimes very inferior to Tintoret." These inequalities of genius accord with the observation of Aristotle, that over works of art good luck has a great power. Every one must observe that poetry is subject to the capricious influence of this good luck of the mind. The poet, when he takes up his pen, knows not what thoughts he may strike

out; or, to speak in his own language, he knows not where his enthusiasm may carry him. A common thought may be followed by a very sublime one; and a rhyme sometimes offers to the imagination many things it would not have produced itself. We must acknowledge that this Fortune, which presides over the fine arts, has her favourites, no less than the dame who presides over riches. There are some on whom she never smiles, whatever pains they take, and whatever exertions they may make to obtain her favours. The difference between the directress of the arts and of wealth is plain enough. One never smiles but on a man of genius; whilst the other shews a preference of blockheads to men of talents.

SENECA.

As the style of this author is abrupt and unconnected, and as he delivers his thoughts in frequent short sentences, he appears to more advantage in a quotation, than when you read the author himself; and thereby he contributes more to grace and dignify,

the productions of another, than to distinguish his own compositions.

OPULENCE.

B***, a rich officer of revenue, one day asked a man of wit, what kind of a thing opulence was, "It is a thing," replied the philosopher, "which can give a rogue an advantage over an honest man."

A SAYING OF POMPEY.

Power holds the laws at defiance. "What, are you such fools as to plead the laws, addressing yourselves to men with swords at their sides?" I am sorry to find this was the speech of Pompey the Great to the Messenians. The sentiment contained in it plainly indicates, that during the war between him and Cæsar, he carried on the contest more for the sake of his private ambition than for the welfare of the republic at large.

ST. MARK'S STATUE AT FLORENCE.

It has been said, in praise of the sculpture of ancient Greece, that the gods would

wish to resemble the statues of themselves. Michael Angelo fell into an expression very similar to this, on seeing the statue of St. Mark, in the church of St. Michael, at Florence. "If that statue resembled St. Mark, one would give him credit for the truth and authenticity of his writings, from a consideration of his physiognomy."

POETRY.

The following thought respecting poets appears to me very ingenious. "The friendship of Apollo is dangerous: he treats the poets with the same kindness as he did his favourite companion Hyacinthus, by breaking his head."—From this thought the device of Tasso was the flower hyacinth, "Sic me Phœbus amat," such is Apollo's kindness to me*.

VENA LACTEA.

M. Pecquet, a regular physician of Montpellier, a native of Dieppe, rendered himself famous for the discovery of a lac-

* See the story of Hyacinthus, killed by a quoit from the hand of Apollo. Ovid, Metam. book xvi.

teal vein, which carries the chyle to the heart: by the means of which he thinks that he has demonstrated that the blood is generated in the heart and not in the liver; and herein he seconds the opinion of Aristotle. In this doctrine he is followed by Bartholinus, a physician of Denmark, and by several eminent men of his country.

THE CARTESIAN PHILOSOPHY.

According to the doctrines laid down by this system, the existence of a Deity is neither placed on certain principles, nor is the immortality of the soul rested on any thing like demonstration. The Cartesians plainly insinuate that the Deity is not necessarily the preserver and governor of the universe: and with regard to the human soul, the Cartesians place it on the level with that of brutes; and consider its immortality not as a necessary consequence of its other properties. Their philosophy is founded upon this absurd supposition, that all the knowledge derived from our senses and our experience is problematic. This mode of philosophising renews the

dangerous doctrines of Pyrrho and his sceptical followers; and at the same time exalts Descartes himself into the sole judge and arbiter of truth.

M. MENAGE.

This great scholar had a memory uncommonly tenacious. One day at the house of Madame Rambouillet, where there were several other ladies, he gave them great entertainment by relating various stories and observations, which he had picked up in the course of his reading. Madame Rambouillet, who was acquainted with this mode of proceeding in conversation, interrupted him, saying, "This is all very fine, Sir, but give us now something immediately of your own invention."

AUGUSTINO CARACCI,

Brother of Annibal, having made a long discourse in praise of that admirable group of statues of Laocoon and his sons, it was observed to Annibal, that it was strange that he did not add his eulogium on this wonderful performance. Annibal took a

crayon in his hand, and drew the group with as much correctness as if he had had the statues before him. This action was a panegyric that exceeded in happiness whatever the most brilliant figures of speech, or the most energetic expressions, could have produced. Turning round to his brother, Annibal observed, "Poets paint with words, and painters speak with their pencil."

PAINTING

Is an act that leads to infinite exertion, and the perfection of it appears difficult to be ascertained. The grandest performances of the greatest masters cannot circumscribe the limits of the art. Raphael has executed prodigious works; but yet we dare to think that he may be excelled: and this great man laboured every day of his life, with a hope to surpass himself. I am certain that had his life, which was a short one, been extended to ever so great a length, and had his progress in his art kept pace with his increasing years, the idea of perfection which he cherished would have prevented

him from being satisfied with what he had done, and he would always have aimed at further improvement. No one but a painter can imagine this infinite process in the art: other men consider it as confined to very narrow limits. The artist himself sees his toil expanding itself every moment into infinite extent. This art may be compared to geography; where a dot stands for a city, a sea, or a kingdom*.

* In confirmation of this opinion of Charpentier, on the infinite progress of the ideal part of painting, let us hear the sentiments of a painter of our own country.—"I believe there never was such a race of men upon the face of the earth, never did men look and act like those we see represented in the works of Raphael, Michael Angelo, Corregio, Parmegiano, and others of the best painters; yet nature appears throughout. We rarely or never see such landscapes as those of Titian, Annibal Caracci, Salvator Rosa, Claude Lorrain, Jasper Poussin, and Reubens; such buildings, in magnificence, as in the pictures of Paul Veronese; but yet there is nothing but what we can believe may be. Our ideas, even of fruits, flowers, insects, draperies, and indeed of all visible things, and of some that are invisible, or creatures of the imagination, are raised and improved in the hands of a good painter; and the mind is thereby filled with the noblest, and therefore the most delightful images." See J. Richardson's Works—Science of a Connoisseur.

POETS AND PAINTERS.

The visible emotions that poets are subject to during the ardour of composition, are not to be ridiculed as grimaces: for they certainly assist to put the fancy in motion. Nor are they to be considered as the struggles of the mind against its own want of fertility; they often proceed from the powers being under very animated exertion. Quintilian compares these agitations to the lashing of the lion's tail*, bestowed on his own back, to excite and prepare himself for a combat. Dominichino used to act the parts of the personages he was about to represent by his pencil; to use such action, to utter such speeches, as he conceived their situation and character would demand: and when he was employed on the picture of the martyrdom of St. Andrew, Carracci coming into his room, surprised him in one of these assumed characters. His voice thundered, and his attitude was fierce and threatening. He was then preparing to paint the figure of a sol-

* See Homer, Iliad xx. l. 164.

dier menacing the saint. When this fit of enthusiasm had subsided, Caracci ran to embrace this great painter, and declared he should consider him from that time his master, and that he had that day caught from him the true method of designing expression.

POPULAR JUDGMENT ON THE ARTS.

It is certain that illiterate persons make sometimes discoveries which escape the learned. Malherbe used to consult his servant, an old woman, upon the music of his verses; and Moliere used the same method with his housekeeper, on the propriety of his characters. Apelles used to expose his paintings in a public place, that he might hear the criticisms of those who were passing in the street, and of which he often took the advantage. Annibal Caracci used often to relate, that he formed his opinion of the merits of the two pictures of the martyrdom of St. Andrew, executed by Dominichino and Francisco Albani, from seeing an old woman with her daughter standing a long time, talking, and survey-

ing the picture of Dominichino, and then passing by that of Albani, without taking the least notice of it. In fact, the best pictures have the most of nature in them.

THE RIDICULOUS USE OF TECHNICAL TERMS.

It is absurd to exhibit such a fondness of the terms of our profession, as to introtroduce them at all times and on all occasions; as the grammarian did before a new-married couple, wishing they might have children of the masculine, feminine, and neuter gender. Young men of the law, both counsellors and attornies, are very apt to make use of the terms of their profession, even in making love to their mistresses. I remember an epigram, that introduces a young barrister making love in the following apologetical terms to his fair one.

Tems est de pleurer et de rire,
Comme on disoit anciennement:
Ainsi vous avez beau me dire,
Je ne puis vous aimer *définitivement*:

Climene, un peu de *surséance*,
Ne *poursuivez* pas, s'il vous plait;
Contentez vous que j'aime à présent par *sentence*,
Dans quelque tems d'ici j'aimerai par *arrest*.

There is a time to laugh and cry:
So says the proverb, so say I.
Demurring is an easy task,
A *noli prosequi* I ask.
Dear plaintiff, I cannot obey
Your *summons* to Love's court to-day:
But be content, dear girl, as yet,
That to its *sentence* I'll submit:
And soon, in spite of all alarms,
I'll meet *confinement* in your arms.

THE AUSTERITY OF OLD MEN.

There is nothing more unjust than the ill temper which many old people shew against young men. An attempt to check the merriment and sportiveness of youth, is not less preposterous than to be angry with the spring of the year, because it produces nothing but blossoms, and to expect from

that early season the fruits of autumn. How different was the humour of Anaxagoras the Greek philosopher! That amiable old man, at the point of death, was asked by the citizens of Lampsacus, what dying command he would wish to enjoin them. His request was, that every year during the whole month in which he died, all the children in the city should be permitted to keep holiday. Diogenes Laertius, who relates this story, adds, that this custom was observed in his remembrance.

TIMANTHES, THE GRECIAN PAINTER.

The expedient of this artist to describe the bulk of a sleeping giant, by the introduction of some satyrs, who are employed in measuring the wrist of the monster with a thyrsus, appears to me equivocal; as it equally serves to intimate the smallness of the satyrs, as well as the enormous size of the giant. As giants and dwarfs are real things in nature, it is necessary, in order to remove this doubt, to add on the same line in the picture some object of deter-

minate dimensions: for instance, a building, or a tree; whose size may be nearly with precision ascertained.

THE TRANSMIGRATION OF SOULS.

A pedant, who chanced to be in company with a party of men of talents and acquirements, was very desirous of making a parade of his learning, by explaining and commenting on that ancient doctrine of Pythagoras, the transmigration of souls; and in the course of his harangue exhibited manifest proofs of his dulness, ignorance, and misapprehension. One of the wits of the company turned round to a person who sat next him, and said aloud: "I understand that Pythagoras was of opinion that the souls of men pass into the bodies of brutes after their decease: but," casting his eye on the pedant, "I did not know that the souls of brutes pass into the bodies of men."

THE EFFECTS OF RURAL SOLITUDE ON A STUDIOUS MIND.

I perfectly agree with the observations

of Quintilian on solitude*: "The beauties that are presented to me in retirement prevent me from feeling myself to be alone, and carry me out of myself. A brilliant sky, the enchanting verdure of fields, the murmuring of waters, bring on my mind insensibly a pleasing oblivion. The subject of my meditation is forgotten: these beauties alone engross my imagination; and, if I think at all, they are the objects on which I meditate. They gain so much the more easily an ascendant over my

* Some readers perhaps may wish to see the original passage in Quintilian: "Non tamen protinus audiendi, qui credunt aptissima in hoc nemora, sylvasque quod illa cœli libertas, locorumque amœnitas, sublimem animum, et beatiorem spiritum parent. Mihi certe jucundus hic magis, quam studiorum hortator videtur esse secessus. Namque illa ipsa, quæ delectant, necesse est avocent ab intentione operis destinati. Neque enim se bona fide in multa simul intendere animus totum potest: et quocunque respexerit, desinit intueri, quod propositum erat. Quare sylvarum amœnitas et præterlabentia flumina, et inspirantes ramis arborum auræ, volucrumque cantus, et ipsa late circumspiciendi libertas, ad se trahunt: ut mihi remittere potius voluptas ista videatur cogitationem, quam intendere. Demosthenes melius, qui se in locum, ex quo nulla exaudiri vox, et ex quo nihil prospici posset, recondebat, ne aliud agere mentem cogerent oculi." Lib. x. cap. 3. De Scribendo.

mind, as no objects but themselves are presented to my senses. The silence which attends on these scenes adds to their power over me; and whilst my attention is solely occupied by these scenes, my sensibility to the enjoyment of them is every moment increased. At length my mind yields itself up to the secret pleasure it feels, and is lulled as it were to sleep by a sort of listless yet most pleasing fascination. Demosthenes conducted himself more wisely; who, in order to dedicate himself solely to study, retired to a spot where he could hear no sounds, where he could see no prospects, and where his eye could not dissipate the attention of his mind from the immediate object of his studies."

A JEST OF CICERO.

Cicero said of Caninius Revilius, who continued consul only for one day, "We have had a consul of such great vigilance, that he has not slept one single night during the whole term of his consulship*."

* See Macrob. Saturnal. lib. ii. cap. 3; where Macrobius quotes Servius for this passage.

HOW TO SELL A BOOK.

A man of wit about the court, who had written a book that rested on the shelf longer than the bookseller was desirous of its company, replied to his remonstrance on this subject, "My good Sir, I do not doubt that I have interest at court sufficient to get this book prohibited, and then you know it will have a rapid sale."

CICERO.

This eminent orator having one day cited into court as an evidence P. Cotta, who wished to be thought a great lawyer, though he was extremely ignorant on that point; and Cotta having declared he knew nothing of the matter in question, "You know nothing of the matter, do you?" replied Cicero. "I suppose you think we are debating a question of law."

CORNEILLE.

This author, in his tragi-comedy of the Cid, has introduced this line:

Si l'amour vit d'espoir, il meurt avec lui.

If love is nurs'd by hope, with hope it dies.

Common experience convinces us that this sentiment of the poet is false in the extreme. Boccacio, to whose opinions on this subject we may at all times appeal, thus expresses himself: "Ma come noi veggiamo assai sovente avenire, quanto la speranza diventa minore, tanto l'amore maggior far si:" we see frequent instances of love gathering strength, in proportion as hope grows weaker and more despairing*.

HEINSIUS.

I could not help laughing at the expression, though I agree in the sentiment of this scholar; who, with a simple frankness, very natural to a Dutchman, declares, that on reading Plato, he felt so much delight and enthusiasm, that one page of that philosopher's work operated upon him like the intoxication produced by swallowing ten bumpers of wine. I have read some bacchanalian passage very similar to this

* For love can hope, when reason would despair, says an English poet.

in Scaliger the elder. "Herodotus is so charming an author," says he, "that I have as much pain to quit him as I feel in leaving my bottle."

PLINY'S NATURAL HISTORY.

According to this author, the Ægyptian physicians entertained a most absurd opinion concerning the human heart; they thought that the heart every year, till a man was fifty years old, increased in weight two drachms; after which period it diminished in the same proportion. So that a man, through a defect of a heart, could not live longer than a century.

SOLITUDE.

It is an observation of Seneca, that we should mix company and retirement, in order to make them both pleasant by a change. In truth, the wish to be always alone shews the temper of a wild and ferocious animal, and carries with it the melancholy darkness of the tomb. The effect of such a disposition of mind is well described by an ancient phrase, "cor suum

edens," eating his own heart. Absolute singleness is the character of the Deity alone: but man is too feeble, too dependent a being, to subsist by himself*.

M. SCUDERY AND HIS SISTER.

Scudery, returning from his government of Nôtre Dame, with his sister, stopped one night at Pont Saint-Esprit, and slept in a two-bedded room. Before they went to sleep, Scudery conversed with his sister about the romance of Cyrus, which they were composing jointly.—"What shall we do," says the brother, "with Prince Mazare?"—"I think we must poison him," replied the sister. "No," rejoined the brother, "I think we must keep the Prince alive longer, as we have some business in hand for him; and it will be in our power to kill him when we like." During this

* On account of the closeness and acuteness of the expression, the reader may wish to see the passage quoted from the philosophic author: "Miscenda tamen sunt ista, et alternanda solitudo et frequentia. Illa nobis faciet hominum desiderium, hæc nostri: et erit altera alterius remedium. Odium turbæ sanabit solitudo; tædium solitudinis, turba."

conversation between the brother and sister about the fate of Prince Mazare, a merchant, who slept in another room adjoining to them, and divided only by a thin partition, had been long listening to this discourse; and assured that the parties were plotting the assassination of some Prince, arose from his bed, and went immediately to a magistrate, to unfold this dark scheme. Scudery and his sister were arrested, and carried prisoners to Paris, and summoned before the court; who, hearing the account of the embryo romance given by the authors, dismissed the cause with a very hearty laugh.

ON TOMBS AND EPITAPHS.

Whenever I cast my eyes on ostentatious epitaphs, I conceive a wish to write under them: "As man is composed of pride and infirmities, passenger, you here behold them fully represented. This tomb indicates the feebleness, and the epitaph the pride of his nature. How just a picture is this of the character of this person when alive! Under robes of silk and embroidery,

he concealed from the eyes of the world the weakness and diseases of his decaying body. A wounded conscience, a feeble understanding, and eternal toil of solicitude and sorrows, were hidden under the mask of a tranquil countenance, and a steady and penetrating eye."

SELF-EVIDENT TRUTHS.

There are things, which, from the obviousness of their truth, provoke, on being repeated, a smile from every one. Ausonius gives an instance of this in an epigram, where he puts this answer in the mouth of Jupiter Ammon. The god, being asked by a wrestler, a boxer, and a runner, if each would obtain a prize in the Olympic games, utters this true and laughable answer: "The wrestler will be victorious, if he does not get a fall; the boxer, if no stouter man attacks him; and the runner, if his antagonist does not outstrip him in speed*."

* The reader may wish to see the original epigram:

Doctus Hylas cæstu, Phegeus catus arte palæstræ
Clarus Olympiacis et Lycus in stadiis,

GREAT MEMORIES.

On the old proverb, "great memory, little judgment," I have somewhere, among other observations, met with the following, "that as the Muses are daughters of memory, it can reflect no dishonour to be a favourite of the mother of the Muses." Cicero calls memory the treasure of the sciences. Montaigne terms memory the strong box of science. Without memory the judgment must be unemployed; and ignorance must be the consequence of a want of memory. Pliny, who calls memory one of the greatest gifts of nature, has recorded some illustrious persons distinguished by this talent. Cyrus knew the names of all his soldiers. Lucius Scipio could call the whole Roman people by name. Cyneas, counsellor to King Pyrrhus,

An possent omnes venturo vincere agone
Hammonem Libyæ consuluere Deum.
Sed Deus, ut sapiens, "Dabitur victoria vobis
Indubitata quidem, si caveatis, ait,
Ne quis Hylam cæstu, ne quis certamine luctæ
Phegea, nè cursu, te Lyce, prætereat."

Auson. Ep. 93.

(of whom this Prince used to say, that he considered him as a partner in his conquest, as obtained by his eloquence) was acquainted with the names of the Roman senate and the army. Mithridates had learned the languages of twenty-two nations, and used to boast that he never wanted an interpreter. Cleopatra, as Plutarch relates, knew the languages of almost all the nations of the East. Can we assert that these great personages were void of judgment, who had not only uncommon but prodigious memories?

AN HARANGUE OF A TURKISH AMBASSADOR, BEFORE POPE LEO X.

An ambassador lately arrived from Constantinople, in order to reside at Rome, retained in his mind so high an idea of the grandeur of the Ottoman empire, that having occasion to make an address to Leo, he thus acquitted himself. Having used the titles of St. Barnard by calling the Pope Abel, with respect to his eldership; Noah by his government, Melchisedech by his order, and Aaron by his dignity—

he added, as characters paramount to all the rest, *Sultan* of the Catholic Church, and *Grand Turk* of the Christians.

AN EPITAPH ON A BAD WIFE, BY HER HUSBAND.

Many years since I translated the following verses, from one in a selection of Greek epigrams:

Reçoi de moi, chere moitié,
Pour gage de mon amitié,
Ce tombeau qu'aucun ne t'envie.
Je dois bien justement te rendre cet honneur:
Car le dernier jour de ta vie
Fut le premier de mon bonheur.

Ah! once dear partner of my days,
Willing to thee this tomb I raise:
My grateful thoughts your shade pursue,
In this small gift so justly due.
No envious tongue, with clamours rude,
Arraign'd this act of gratitude;
For all must know, that, with my wife,
I lost each hour of care and strife.

WOMEN.

It is in vain that we make sometimes strong resolutions to avoid an intimate connection with the fair sex. It is to no purpose that we make ourselves acquainted with their faults; we never can raise in ourselves a perfect dislike to the sex. We have in our hearts a love of women implanted by Nature herself, that renders void every resolution we might have formed to hate them. Pygmalion, who had conceived so strong an aversion to women, that he had determined always to live single, continually amused himself with making beautiful statues of women; and entertained his fancy with designing those charms which nature has endowed them with. His heart betrayed itself by his employment, without his being conscious of it: and it appears as if Nature pleased herself with putting him to confusion and distress, by obliging him to seek for in his art that enjoyment, of which he in vain thought he might endeavour to deprive himself*.

* Ovidii Metamorph. lib. x. lin. 243.

Philosophers sport with the follies of mankind: tradesmen make an advantage of them; and players both sport with them and profit by them.

When modern times exhibit a brilliant action, why should we not quote it, without searching for an example in antiquity? As for my part, when a neighbour has done or said a remarkable thing, I speak of it with as much veneration as if it were recorded of one of the seven sages of Greece. Montaigne has uttered the same sentiment. To little minds alone is it necessary to recommend virtue by great names. If an action is not intrinsically good, the name of Epaminondas, of Alexander, or of Cæsar, can stamp no merit on it, and if a sentiment is false, it cannot be rendered otherwise by affixing the names of Plato and Seneca to it.

ELOQUENCE.

There are branches of science which a person may neglect to cultivate without in-

convenience to himself; namely, poetry, painting, astronomy, mathematics, &c. and we expect to find these arts practised by their professors exclusively. But this is not true with regard to eloquence: every man talks, and should therefore exercise the talent of speaking. Eloquence is a necessary quality in every art and in every profession. It is incumbent on all of us to explain our thoughts, to prove our positions, to enforce our sentiments. By doing these things well we gain praise; and it therefore becomes us to cultivate this faculty. The Emperor Numerian thought the inscription on his statue, "to the most eloquent man of his time," no disparagement of his high rank. The admiration bestowed on able speakers, and the contempt shewn to others who acquit themselves ill in an oration, is not confined to men of sense and education. For persons in the lowest ranks of mankind treat with coarse raillery those among themselves who labour under an awkward or unpleasant elocution. It is a privilege peculiar to eloquence to be exempted from contempt,

and from its qualities being depreciated but by itself. It is said of Plato, that when he affects to undervalue eloquence, he in the very instance bestows the greatest praise on it, by couching in the most expressive and brilliant terms his abuse of it. The most barbarous nations, who have been sworn foes to literature and the fine arts, have yet retained a love of orators. We see this attachment to the art discovered by their delight in hearing and making harangues, and the disappointment they display in any want of success which their speeches may incur. Let no one then blame the cultivation of a talent so natural, and at all times so necessary; without which we become objects of neglect and contempt, among the most savage and most illiterate nations.

A very ignorant nobleman observing one day at dinner a person eminent for his philosophical talents intent on choosing the delicacies of the table, said to him, "What! do philosophers love dainties?"—"Why

not?" returned the scholar. "Do you think, my Lord, that the good things of this world were made only for blockheads?"

INDOLENCE.

Seneca has a very just observation on this propensity of the mind. "Self-constraint," says he, "is necessary, to force the mind into exertion." Cogenda mens, ut incipiet. The human appetite, at certain seasons, will grow languid, and by tasting food regains its powers. It is necessary, with respect to the mind, that the disgust, the inaptitude to toil, should be over-ruled; and when once it is set in motion, the thoughts follow one another in abundance, and with a facility which appeared impossible to the mind in a state of inaction.

HISSING.

This mode of expressing popular disapprobation of a public speaker appears, from the following passage in Cicero's Letters, to have been very ancient. Speaking of the orator Hortensius, Cælius thus describes the success of that speaker's elo-

quence: "Hoc magis animadversum est, quod intactus a sibilo pervenerat Hortensius ad senectutem*:" it is worth observation to remark, that Hortensius arrived at old age, without once incurring the disgrace of being hissed at.

I see nothing but great rusticity in the reply of a Spartan to a person, who invited him to hear a man, who was famous for his imitation of the notes of a nightingale. "My friend, I have a nightingale at home." Surely happy imitations give sometimes greater pleasure than the things themselves. It would be a ridiculous reply, in answer to a request to attend at the sight of a fine picture, to say, "My friend, I see men and women every day, and I am content with the originals."

There is nothing which contributes more to our repose than the ignorance of our evil destinies. To know our future calamities is to be miserable before our time.

* See Cælius ad Ciceron. lib. viii. Epist. Fam. ii.

"What use had it been to Crassus," says Cicero, "amidst his accumulation of riches, to have been assured that he and his son should perish ignominiously beyond the Euphrates, and that his army should be totally defeated? What miseries had Cæsar and Pompey previously felt, amidst their brilliant actions and glorious triumphs, if they had foreseen their respective misfortunes; viz. that the former should be assassinated in the senate, and the latter on the confines of Ægypt, by the hands of those who were once their friends and dependants!"

OBSERVATION ON HORACE, BOOK I. ODE III.

I was much disappointed on reading this ode, which Horace addresses to his friend Virgil, and prays for his safe return from the voyage which he had undertaken. Horace, after having in a dry manner wished him a safe voyage, quits his friend, and enters into a declamation on the courage of those who first encountered the perils of navigation, and on the general

rashness of human enterprises. It is in vain that we expect at the end any further mention of Virgil's danger.

THE USE OF EPITHETS.

It is necessary that the epithet should increase the meaning of the word to which it is annexed: without this effect, terms are multiplied without any use. We should be cautious likewise and sparing in admitting epithets. Quintilian* compares a composition overcharged with epithets to a company of soldiers, whose number of sutlers is equal to their number of fighting men; in which case an addition is made to the troop, without increasing its effective force.

BON MOT.

Some person having observed to the famous Jerome Bignon†, that Rome was

* Book ii. chap. 6. On tropes, &c.

† Jerome Bignon was born at Paris 1590. His talents and erudition, together with the elegance of his manners, introduced him to Henry IV. who created him Attorney General; which important office he discharged with great sagacity and integrity. His chief literary productions are entitled, "Des

the mansion of piety: "Very true," replied Bignon, "but piety resembles some other great personages, one can never find them at home."

PASSAGE IN OVID CENSURED.

A passage in the fifth book of Ovid's Metamorphoses, where a player on the lyre is represented as mortally wounded, and yet in his dying moments attempting to strike out a tune, appears to me very absurd.

——— digitis morientibus ille retentat
Fila lyræ,———

——— with his dying fingers tries
To tune his lyre.

An enthusiast or madman a musician may be, no doubt; but be he ever so much so, if he had received a mortal wound in the body, he would most certainly rather

Antiquités Romaines," 1604, 8vo. and "Description de la Terre Sainte," 1600. He was the intimate friend of the learned Father Paul of Venice; and Pope Paul V. conferred signal favours upon Bignon. His life was published in 1675, in 12mo. by the Abbé Perrault.

take to flight, and fling down his lyre, than think of playing on it in such a case. Poets and painters should think of the excellent rule of Quintilian: "Naturam intueri et sequi."—"Keep your eye upon nature, and follow her." Poets may chuse what circumstances they please; embellish them as much as they chuse, but with this restriction, that they do not swerve from nature and truth*.

BON MOT.

When L—— took his friend B—— severely to task for the meanness of his conduct, in hunting after the dinners of the great, the gormandizer pleaded in his

* *Charpentier* in this attack on Ovid trusted too much to his memory, or he had not left out the part of the second line, by which the justness of his criticism is in a great measure done away. The passage stands thus:

—— digitis morientibus ille retentat
Fila lyræ; *casuque* canit miserabile carmen.

Which the English translator having his eye on the whole passage through, very faithfully translates—

His harp he *held*, tho' sinking on the ground,
Whose strings in death his trembling fingers found,
By *chance*, and tun'd by *chance*, a dying sound.

excuse that he was so very much *pressed.* "Yes," answered L——, "I can easily imagine that your appetite is very *pressing.*"

LOYAL HARANGUE.

When Louis XIV. visited Rheims in 1666, the Mayor of the place was called upon to make a speech to the King. The Mayor brought with him some bottles of wine and some delicate dried pears, and presenting them to his Majesty, said, "Sire, we offer you our wine, our pears, and our hearts, which are the best things which our city can boast of." The monarch gave the Mayor a friendly tap on the shoulder, and replied most graciously, "Mr. Mayor, I thank you very heartily for your harangue."

A SINGULAR PHRASE IN PLINY'S PANEGYRIC ON TRAJAN.

Phrases which appear noble in one language, may in another be vulgar. After Pliny had enumerated all the good qualities of Trajan, he puts this question in these terms, "Nonne longè latèque principem

ostentant?" Do they not shew the length and breadth of the emperor. On translating this we should use some expression in our language, which may worthily represent it, "Do not these qualities proclaim an accomplished prince?"

PASSAGE IN HORACE CRITICISED.

The finest genius sometimes falls into errors. The following passages in an ode* of Horace, justifies my remark (xix. lib. i.)

Urit me Glyceræ nitor,
Splendentis pario marmore purius.

"The countenance of Glycera more resplendent than Parian marble, inflames me." Now it is the property of marble to dazzle, and not to burn.

* A more tasteless criticism never issued out of the mouth of any Dutch commentator. To tax a metaphor with being unjust, because it accords with the literal meaning, is forfeiting all pretensions to judge of poetic merit. M. Charpentier should have recollected that the word "uro" is continually by Horace used to signify the inspiring love; and the same application of it may be seen in Terence's Eunuch. Act III. Scene 1.

BON MOT OF HENRY IV. OF FRANCE.

Henry the IVth. passing through a small town perceived some of the town's-people deputed to harangue him. Just as the principal person had commenced his oration, an ass, at a few yards distance, began to bray. The King, with gravity exclaimed, "Gentlemen, one at a time, if you please."

DECLAMATION.

We see many orations eloquent indeed, but so empty, that they may justly be called elegant trifles. Balzac* used to boast that he possessed the art of talking without saying any thing. Cicero condemns severely this style of eloquence—"Est enim et scientia comprehendenda rerum plurima-

* Jean Louis Guez Seigneur de Balzac was an eminent French academician in the time of Cardinal Richelieu, of whom he was a favourite: he died 1654. His works in folio, 2 vols. were published in 1665. Among his poetry, his elegies and epistles are esteemed the best. His prose epistles gained him great credit, till his rival Voiture shewed, by his letters, that simplicity and wit were more interesting than all the tricks of rhetoric and bombastic eloquence.

rum, sine qua verborum volubilitas inanis atque irridenda est." Without multifarious knowledge a volubility of words is empty and ridiculous declamation.

BON MOT OF CICERO.

When Hortensius defended the cause of that Indian plunderer Verres, he received as a present from him a very beautiful piece of sculpture, representing a sphinx. During the reply of Cicero to the defence of Verres, Hortensius exclaimed frequently, "I do not understand you, your speeches are all enigmas to me."—"You need not trouble yourself about that," rejoined the facetious orator, "for you know, Hortensius, you have a famous sphinx at home*."

* The sphinx, according to the witch stories of antiquity, was an hag who propounded riddles, and caused the deaths of those unfortunate persons who could not resolve them. To this story of the sphinx Cicero alludes, though not to the figure of the sculpture in the possession of Hortensius, which represented a Chimæra, and was afterwards imitated as an ornament in architecture, as at present over gate-ways and portals, half-woman and half beast. Plutarch has related in his life of Cicero, that this sphinx was of ivory; and in his "Morals," he represents it as made of ivory.

EPITAPH *.

I was sufficiently pleased with some epigrams in the Greek to translate them; the following is one of them.

ON A DRUNKEN OLD WOMAN.

Passant, çi-gist la vieille *Macaride*
Au rouge nez, au teint toujours humide,
Et qui buvoit du soir jusqu' au matin;
Sans aucune douleur elle quitta sa fille,
Son fils, son gendre et toute sa famille;
Son seul regret fut de quitter le vin.

IMITATED FROM THE GREEK.

Here rests Myrillo's drunken wife,
Drawn to the dregs her cask and life;
This vast round goblet on her tomb
Is plac'd, a symbol of her doom.

* Charpentier by too much indulgence in imitation of the Greek epitaph, has omitted some particulars which are appropriate to the tomb. It was the custom of antiquity to stigmatize the memories of sots by placing a goblet on their tombs.

Junius on the Painting, &c. of the Antients. P. 101. folio.

Tho' dead, she mourns: alas! she left
Her children of her care bereft!
She weeps no doubt with grief sincere,
Snatch'd from an husband's tender care.
False are the reasons you apply,
She mourns, because her mouth is dry.

A COMMON CASE.

L—— at the age of 65, gravely remarks that he feels no longer a desire to attend at the play-houses or be present at a show. L—— is not so indifferent to pleasure from superior wisdom, but from the natural incapacity (which age brings on) to relish amusement. Give L—— the vigour and vivacity of youth, and he would again be a proof that there is a wide difference between a man who is cured of the vanity of the world and him who is disgusted with it*.

A SEVERE REPROOF.

L—— was of an austere disposition and

* It is the acute observation of some English writer, that men say they leave their vices when in fact their vices have left them.

could not conceal it easily. A young man of quality, but of weak understanding, was practising with great self-complacency the trick of throwing up a cherry in the air and catching it in his mouth. L—— burst out on the twelfth cherry ascending, "My Lord what cur has taught you that trick?"

FASTIDIOUS AUTHORS.

Some men are never content with their expressions as thinking them below their thoughts, and may be compared to some women who are never contented with pictures of themselves as conceiving them inferior to the originals. Quintilian* has related a Bon Mot. J. Florus seeing a young student very melancholy, asked him the cause. "I have been three days about the commencement of my harangue, and yet 'tis not begun." "Numquid tu melius

* Quintilian. lib. x. chap. 3. This instructive writer adds on this subject of fastidious composers. "It is not easy to add who are most to be blamed, those who approve of every thing which they write, or those who are satisfied with nothing." Vanity is the origin of both errors.

dicere vis quam potes?" Are you not desirous to do better than you can?

A PASSAGE IN CICERO REPREHENDED.

It always appeared to me an absurd circumstance that in the Treatise on Divination, which consists of a dialogue between *Cicero* and his brother *Quintus*, that the latter should repeat to Cicero the orator's own dream. Lib. i. de Divinatione*.

SPUR TO INDUSTRY.

Seneca says very sensibly, "cogenda mens est ut incipiat," we must use compulsion on the mind to excite it to exertion. The appetite to continue this exertion will then increase, and the mind feels an increase of faculties, vigour, and abundance, which

* Charpentier most probably quoted this circumstance from memory, or he would not have so censured it. Quintus, who was the defender of the veracity of dreams against Cicero, having related his own about his brother which had been verified, adverts to Cicero's own dream as told him by Sallust, who was there himself with Cicero when his dream, foretelling his recal to Rome, occurred to him. Here Cicero had an opportunity of denying any of the circumstances, had Sallust or Quintus misrepresented them.

at the commencement of action it would not even have suspected. One thought introduces another, and the treasures of the understanding are opened every moment more and more. I recommend the sentence of Seneca, "Cogenda mens est ut incipiat," to be written over the study door of every man whose mind is subject to fits of indolence.

BON MOT.

A witty moralist used to say of taverns, that they were places where men sold madness by the bottle.

INSTABILITY OF SOME MINDS.

A SIMILE.

There are some characters whose minds are never fixed upon any pursuit for two minutes successively. The same resolution remains with them only for a second, and a train of various and opposite sentiments is continually passing through their minds. Such persons may be compared to the tail of a peacock, "Toties denique mutanda, quoties movenda," every new motion produces a variety.

A BULL IN WRITING.

M. Giry* in his translation of the "Apology of Socrates" has this passage. "After the manner of those who in the midst of *darkness* and the *obscurity* of night combat with their own *shadows*, it is necessary that I should defend myself, &c." Bodies can never produce shadows in the dark night, and in uniform obscurity, nor could Plato have committed such an egregious error.

PLAGIARISMS OF MOLIERE.

This comic writer pillaged without scruple the thoughts of others. The scene of the Pyrrhonian philosopher, in the "Forced Marriage," is taken word for word from Rabelais. The play of the "Physician in Spite of Himself," is founded on the circumstance related by Grotius, and the subject is in Olearius. The story of "George

* It is the more remarkable that the translator should have been misled into the flowery regions of metaphor, as Plato in his apology of Socrates, at the beginning, has introduced his master declaring to his judges his aversion to any oratorical flourishes, in the course of his defence, as equally unbecoming his age and his cause.

Dandin" is stolen from the Decamerone of Boccace. To Bergerac he is indebted for his character of the Pedant, ridiculed in the tricks of Scapin.

IMPROPRIETIES OF PAINTERS.

Domenichino* has committed a capital fault in mixing a burlesque circumstance in the grave subject of St. Andrew's Flagellation. In the group of figures a soldier is represented laughing at his comrade, who, pulling at a rope, had fallen backwards on the ground. Caravaggio has committed a still grosser fault in his picture of the "Breaking of the Bread;" one of the pilgrims in the act of doing homage to Christ, spills wine on his garment in the attitude of a person vomiting it.

A SATIRE ON A BAD POET AND A WORSE MAN.

Ille Tigellinus tota notissimus urbe,
Fraudibus insignis versibus atque malis;

* Domenichino or Domenico Zampieri was the pupil of Denis Calvert, a Fleming. Michael Angelo Amerigi du Caravaggio prided himself on the most exact imitations of the vilest natural objects. FELIBIEN's Painters, &c.

Frigidus heroum cantor, quem regia torvo
Nascentem adspexit lumine Calliope:
Dona ducum et famam qui captans arte sagaci,
Nomen et ingentes accumulavit opes:
Non potuit semper Nemesin vitare potentem
Ultoresque Deos sensit adesse sibi.
Nunc exors famæ, nunc pondus inutile terræ
Ediscit sannas ludibriumque pati.
Et male quæsito dum sordidus incubat auro,
Et numerat nummos Pontice vivit inops.
Causa malorum in promptu est, illaudabile carmen
Atque malo pejor carmine avaritia.

IMITATED.

Tigellius, and who does not know it,
Is both a miser and a poet;
In ill-got wealth he takes delight,
And versifies in nature's spite;
And, tho' a blockhead and a cheat,
Swindles the favours of the great;
Long has he borne, with ill-starr'd fate,
Of Gods and men th' eternal hate.
To empty benches he rehearses
His mis'rable and patch'd-up verses.

Whilst o'er his loaded bags he hovers,
His phiz the famish'd wretch discovers.
Scorn'd as a bard and by all hated,
For av'rice yet unimitated.

These verses were written on M. Chapelain* and his ridiculous poem the "Maid."

* Chapelain was a member of the French academy, and had obtained some considerable credit by an ode dedicated to Cardinal Richelieu, but by editing his "Pucelle," above alluded to, he lost all his poetic fame, and being very avaricious, rich, and worldly, became the laughing stock of his brother poets. He lived to the year 1674, and died, aged 74, at Paris. His Poem, "La Pucelle," had been advertised more than twenty years before its appearance, which gave rise to the following impromptu of a wit at that time.

"Illa Capellani dudum expectata Puella,
Post tanta in lucem tempora prodit anus."

IMITATED.

The public long, but long in vain,
Look'd for the "Miss" of Chapelain.
At length her ladyship appears,
So long delay'd, and what is worse,
Seem'd from the well-known lapse of years,
Not as a damsel but his nurse.

END OF CARPENTERIANA.

SANTOLIANA.

SKETCH

OF THE

LIFE AND WRITINGS

OF

SANTEUL.

JOHN BAPTIST DE SANTEUIL, or SANTEUL, was born at Paris in May 1630, of an ancient family. Having gone through a regular education, he became a canon-regular of St. Victor. In this retreat he gave himself entirely to the study of Latin poetry; in which his success was equal to the great ardour with which he pursued his favourite employment. He adorned and enriched Paris with various

inscriptions affixed to the public fountains, and to other places dedicated to the notice of posterity. The character of these inscriptions (which are written in Latin) bears the appropriate marks of grandeur, united with simplicity of thought and perspicuity of expression. The learned and pious Bossuet persuaded Santeul to exercise his talents in sacred poetry. His advice was taken; and the genius of Santeul shone with fresh and undiminished lustre in this new department. His Latin hymns are distinguished by their majestic and luminous style, and by a dignity of character not unequal to his subjects. Besides these hymns, which were printed in 12mo, Santeul published in 3 vols. 12mo, various specimens of Latin poetry, in which a vigour of expression and the fire of a warm fancy are happily combined. Santeul was admired by all his cotemporaries, who were either distinguished by the brilliancy of their talents, or the eminence of their rank. Santeul was however an humorist; and the peculiarities of his character are thus exhibited by the acute, sagacious, and compre-

hensive delineation of La Bruyere: "Shall I produce another uncommon personage? —Imagine a man in one moment good-humoured, tractable, easy, and complaisant; in another, harsh, violent, choleric, and capricious. Fancy to yourself a person at once simple, ingenuous, credulous, sportive, and volatile; in short, a child with gray hairs. Let this man for a moment recollect himself, and obey the impulse of his own mind, you will be astonished at the vivacity of his imagination, the elevation of his thoughts, the sublimity of his diction, and the depth of his erudition. Can you be speaking of the same man? Yes; I mean Theodas, and him only. He exclaims: he is enraptured: he rolls himself on the ground: he springs up: he thunders; and amidst the storm he sends forth coruscations, that please by their beauty, and dazzle by their brilliancy. To drop the metaphor. Theodas speaks like a fool and thinks like a sage. He utters truths in a ridiculous manner, and sensible things in a silly way; and we are surprised to find so much intellect shining through the clouds

of buffoonery, contortions, and grimaces. One trait more must be added to this extraordinary character. He is very greedy of praise, and irritable against all critics; yet shews himself willing to be influenced by their censures. I can almost persuade myself I am drawing the portraits of two persons. Yet another thing may be said of him: Theodas is at once an honest, a pleasant, and excellent man." See La Bruyere's Characteristics, vol. ii. p. 92.

The celebrated Rollin wrote the following epitaph on Santeul:

Quem superi præconem, habuit quem sancta poetam
Religio, latet hoc marmore Santolius.
Ille etiam heroas, fontesque et flumina et hortos
Dixerat: at cineres quid juvat iste labor?
Fama hominum, merces sit versibus æqua profanis:
Mercedem poscunt carmina sacra, Deum.

Pride of the Church! Religion's fav'rite bard!
Santeul! thy tomb shall future saints regard.
'Tis past! but once thy praise could grace impart
To the bright forms of valour and of art*.
Fame shall these labours gratefully record,
But Heav'n alone thy pious strains reward.

* These lines allude to his verses on the Princes of Conde, his inscriptions on the public fountains, and the gardens of Chantilly, inserted in his Latin poetry.

SANTOLIANA.

WHEN in a large company it was hinted to Santeul, that they all expected much pleasant conversation from him, but any thing on poetry was interdicted; Santeul then addressed himself to each individual, and drew the character of each person. "You, Colonel, I hope, will not talk of war, and your celebrated exploits. You, Marquis, I must beg to be silent on the subject of love, and your many conquests among the fair sex. You, Sir, will be so good as not to talk of play, and of your ill luck at the tables. I prohibit you, noble Sir, from talking of your genealogy and numerous ancestors. Mr. Lawyer, let us hear of no pleadings, in which you

have been of late so successful. You, Doctor, I must limit to your wonderful cures, but not a word of those whom you have slain. Now, Gentlemen, we are all upon the same footing."

VERSES ON VENICE.

Sanazarius was the author of the following distichs written in praise of Venice; the inhabitants of which city were so gratified by the compliments contained in these verses, and delighted by their merit, that they made the poet a present of 6000 golden crowns for the composition.

Viderat Adriacis Venetam Neptunus in undis
  Stare urbem, et toto ponere jura mari:
Nunc mihi Tarpeias quantumvis, Jupiter, arces
  Objice, et illa tui mœnia Martis, ait.
Si Pelago Tibrim præfers, urbem aspice utramque;
  Illam homines dices, hanc posuisse Deos.

Neptune saw Venice on the Adria stand
Firm as a rock, and all the sea command.

Think'st thou, O Jove, said he, Rome's walls excel?
Or that proud cliff, whence false Tarpeia fell?
Grant Tiber best, view both; and you will say,
That men did those, Gods these foundations lay*.

M** passing by a door at which Santeul was standing, either in expectation of some one, or involved in a poetical reverie, to which he was often subject, addressed the poet, and asked him what he was thinking about: "Stop a moment," says Santeul; "I was counting the number of cuckolds that passed by me whilst I stood. You, Sir, make the twentieth."

The Abbé *** was walking with Santeul one day in the King's garden, and mentioning a certain Lady, was very extravagant in the praises which he bestowed

* Nichols's Poems, vol. ii. p. 140.

on her. Santeul interrupted the Abbé, by observing, that there was still much left to say about her. "What have I omitted to say?" replied the Abbé. "That the Lady has many traits of character, which you have not mentioned, and none that you have, Sir," retorted Santeul.

ON WOMEN.

M. Basile asked Santeul one day, why pretty women were in general pleasant and good-humoured, and ugly women, on the contrary, harsh, and always out of humour. "The reason is obvious," replied the Bard: "the former are accustomed to have civil and agreeable things said to them perpetually, and the latter are daily chagrined at being neglected." Being asked another time, why pretty women were less sensible and accomplished than plain women, Santeul replied, "The latter seek company which may instruct them, and the former shew generally an aversion to such kind of society; so that those women, who have no beauty, receive from nature propensities that compensate to them

the want of charms*." On the subject of infidelity to their husbands, so notorious in some women, Santeul, on being asked the reason of these irregularities, replied, "This conduct in the women is for the most part occasioned by the frivolous characters of their husbands."

Santeul used to tell the following story very frequently. "I was one day seated in a confession chair; a Lady came and kneeled down by me, and gave me the history of her whole life. Finding that I did not make any answer at the conclusion of her recital, she demanded absolution. "Do you take me for a priest, Madam?" said I. "If you are not," replied the Lady, "why did you listen to me? I will go and inform against you to the Prior."

* The former part of this paragraph will remind the reader of the truly sagacious and philosophical observation of Lord Bacon on this subject. "Whosoever hath any thing in his person that induces contempt, has a perpetual spur in himself to rescue himself from scorn." Bacon's Essays and Counsels, Moral and Civil—On Deformity.

" And I, Madam, will go and inform your husband."

Santeul's favourite amusement was to keep finches. Wanting two hard eggs in order to feed his favourite birds, he applied to the cook of the convent for them. The man, who thought that the demand was too frequently repeated, denied his request. Santeul, in great anger, with his eyes rolling, and his fist clenched, repeated this line:

" Numquid Santolius non valet ova duo?"

" Cannot Santeul command a brace of eggs?"

The cook, who did not understand this extemporary effusion of the Muse, and afraid of the poetical raptures of Santeul, immediately presented him with the eggs.

On the death of Lulli, Santeul, who composed an epitaph for this celebrated

musician, used to relate, that during the writing of those verses, a favourite and tame finch, perching on his head, sung in so charming a manner, that the bird seemed actuated by the soul of the departed artist, and appeared desirous by his melody to inspire him with thoughts worthy of his subject. The bird sat the whole time on his head, exerting himself very much till the following verses were finished.

Perfida mors, inimica, audax, temeraria, et excors,
Crudelisque et cœca, probris te absolvimus istis.
Non de te querimur, tua sint hæc munia magna.
Sed quando per te populi regisque voluptas,
Non ante auditis rapuit qui cantibus orbem,
Lullius eripitur, querimur modo; surda fuisti.

Perfidious art thou, Death, and thy commands
Harsh and tyrannic; and too bold thy hands:

Such are thy dreadful attributes; in vain,
Tho' press'd beneath thy yoke, would man complain.
But when your dart, great Lulli to destroy,
You shook, and damp'd a king's and nation's joy,
And robb'd too soon each fond enraptur'd ear
Of strains the earth again shall never hear.
Complain we must, although to ills resign'd,
And mourn that Fate is deaf, as well as blind.

Whether this serenade was too long continued, or that some accident befel it, the poor bird was dead the next morning. Santeul felt the loss very sensibly. He had given twenty crowns for the finch. It was remarkable for the dazzling whiteness of its plumage, and its familiarity with the Poet.

The great Bossuet, offended with the irregular conduct of Santeul, concluded his reproaches with saying, "If I was the

superior of your convent, I would send you to some obscure prison, where you might study your breviary." "Were I the King of France," replied Santeul, "I would ship you off to the island of Patmos, where you might write a new Apocalypse."

Santeul was very vain of his poetical talents. When he had finished any poetry, with which he was particularly delighted, he used to say, "Now I will go and put chains along all the bridges of the town, to prevent my brother bards from drowning themselves."

Some friends in conversation with Santeul were disputing which city was the most beautiful. Several were mentioned. "Is there no city at a greater distance from Paris?" said Santeul. One was immediately mentioned. "Then I give my judgment," replied this humourist, "that the last which you spoke of is the most delightful."—"Why?" replied a person in company.

"Because," replied he, "it is farthest from my convent*."

Santeul supplied a young Licentiate, about to take his Doctor's degree, with the following verses, apologizing for the smoothness and fairness of his countenance.

Quid roseas laudare genas, frontemque venustam
Convenit? An me sic laudas et ludis, amicè?
Frigida laus fuerit, teneris magis apta puellis.
Doctores nos ruga decet, frontisque severæ
Dura supercilia, et spirantes grandia vultus.
Plus horrenda placet quam quæ fucata colore
Effigies, sua nam sensibus veneranda vetustas.
Nec mihi fœmineos tu semivir objice vultus;
Non sum adeo pulcher. Placido me in littore vidi,
Vidi jam rugas contracta in fronte seniles;
Plaudebamque mihi, deformis et esse volebam,

* "Were I in search of the most miserable and the most happy man," says a penetrating genius, "I would look for them in a cloister." Warton's Essay on Pope, vol. ii. note.

Ut fierem Doctor. Tandem accedentibus annis
Oris blanditias delebit tempus, at imo
Delebit nunquam vivos de pectore vultus.

IMITATED.

What, praise my rosy cheeks and youthful face?
Alas! such features would my rank disgrace.
Such beauties suit fair ladies of eighteen,
And not a Doctor's philosophic mien.
The beetle brow, the wrinkle deep and wide,
A pompous look by studious thoughts supply'd,
Are a sage Doctor's charms. No more upbraid
My miss-like visage. Lately I survey'd
In yonder stream my phyz, and found it rough
With wrinkles, and for a Doctor's grave enough.
Besides, revolving years will soon destroy
Whate'er remains that marks me for a boy:
Yet still I hope they will not snatch one part
Of the fair image of an honest heart.

It is said, that, on hearing these lines repeated, the learned assembly with one voice declared them to be written by Santeul; so well was the Poet's Latin style known to all the audience.

The learned and pious Bossuet persuaded Santeul from any longer debasing his great talents in writing on profane and trifling subjects; and exhorted him to labour in the composition of sacred poems, as hymns, &c. Santeul followed Bossuet's advice.

On the introduction of these hymns in the service at the abbey of St. Victor, to which Santeul belonged, a brother canon objected to their being admitted, as the compositions of a man, to whose manners and conversation he could not but vehemently object. "Nay," said Santeul, "you should consider the work, and not the workman. For instance, the tabernacle which belongs to our altar has been received by you all, and very much admired;

yet it is well known that the person who constructed it was an heretic."

One day, when Santeul was present at a declamation delivered at the Sorbonne, a young student in his hearing said, "There is Santeul." "Young man," said Santeul, "you might have added Mr." The scholar replied, "We always say Homer, Virgil, Horace; we never affix Mr. to the names of great men." Santeul rose up from his seat in a moment, ran towards the young student and eagerly embraced him.

END OF SANTOLIANA.

COLOMESIANA.

SKETCH

OF THE

LIFE AND WRITINGS

OF

COLOMIES.

PAUL COLOMIES was born at Rochelle in 1638. His father was a physician and a Protestant. The application of Colomies to literature was diligent and successful: and though his talents could not obtain him the merit of an original writer, or the fame of extraordinary scholarship, yet they enabled him to be an useful member of the republic of letters. With a good understanding, and a respectable fund of erudition, he illustrated the characters, the

writings, and the lives of many scholars who had adorned his own country. A treatise edited by Colomies, and reprinted in 1709 by the learned Fabricius, entitled Gallia Orientalis, exhibits Colomies as a man of taste, candour, and knowledge. The Gallia Orientalis gives an account of the lives and writings of his countrymen, who had distinguished themselves by a proficiency in the Oriental languages. A publication, the work of Colomies, concurring with the plan of the foregoing, was revived in 1730, with the title of Italia et Hispania Orientalis, in 4to. The Bibliotheque Choisie, reprinted in 1731, marks the peculiar turn of study which made Colomies so useful to young students; who may reap great advantage from the Bibliotheque Choisie, as it will direct and inform them concerning authors in the various branches of literature and science. Though Colomies was not an inventor of any thing new, yet was he the faithful treasurer of whatever was old and valuable. He knew how to render the re-production of learned curiosities fascinating to his readers, and

to apply his own acquisitions to the most effectual purposes. His great intimacy with Isaac Vossius introduced him, when he came to England, among men of letters and patronage. At the arrival of Colomies in England, not long before the revocation of the Edict of Nantz, Isaac Vossius was Canon of Windsor. Colomies became librarian at Lambeth, with a competent salary. Deprived some time after of this situation, by his patron the Archbishop of Canterbury, as a non-juror being driven from his see, Colomies fell a victim to poverty, sorrow, and disease; and died in 1692, adding another name to the Appendix of Pierius Valerianus's treatise De Infelicitate Literatorum—On the miseries of Learned Men.

COLOMESIANA.

JOHN SELDEN

WAS the most eminent scholar of his time; but his style of writing was harsh and unpleasant. England never produced before him a person so celebrated for his knowledge of the belles-lettres. He died in 1654, at the age of seventy. The following spirited couplets were written on him, and placed under his portrait*.

Talem se ore tulit, quem gens non barbara quævis
Quantovis pretio mallet habere suum.
Qualis at ingenio, vel quantus ab arte, loquentur
Diique ipsi et Lapides, si taceant homines.

* Verses written by Dr. Gerard Langbaine, editor of Longinus, with notes, &c.

Lo! such was Selden, and his learned fame
All polish'd nations would be proud to claim.
The Gods*, nay, e'en the Stones†, their voice would raise,
Should men by silence dare withhold their praise.

M. Junius, who was very intimate with Selden, assured me that this profound scholar used to employ a variety of persons to read for him, and extract, &c. His library, which was very extensive, forms now a part of the Bodleian.

HONOURS CHANGE MANNERS.

"Honores mutant mores" is a common proverb; and the following account of a great Prelate is a singular instance of the truth of the observation. Baldwin, who from the state of an obscure monk became Archbishop of Canterbury, so changed his conduct and manners, that Pope Urban the Second, hearing of his evil life and

* See his book on the Syrian Gods.

† His treatise on the Parian Marbles.

conversation, sent him a letter with this superscription: "Balduino, Monacho ferventissimo, Abbati calido, Episcopo tepido, Archiepiscopo remisso:" To Baldwin, the most zealous Monk, the warm Abbot, the lukewarm Prelate, and the careless Archbishop *.

GROTIUS.

The book on the Truth of the Christian Religion, written by Grotius, is a most admirable performance, and deserves to be the vade-mecum of every sincere christian. It has been honoured with various translations into foreign languages. Besides two French translations, this treatise is known by Arabian, Grecian, English, and German versions.

LEO X.

I saw in the library of my friend Vossius a large MS. folio written in Latin, which contained an exact detail of every day's transactions of Leo X. during his pontificate. M. Vossius put a very high value on this

* See Gyraldus Barrius, Cambrensis Itinerar. lib. ii. cap. 14.

MS. as it contained many circumstances of a particular nature, and which were to be found no where else. I believe the learned M. Peiresc* had a book of this description; at least I remember in the catalogue of his MSS. the following title: "Diarium Pontificatûs Leonis X."

* Nicholas Claude F. Peiresc was an eminent French antiquary, and an illustrious ornament of the seventeenth century. He employed an affluent fortune in collecting scarce books, manuscripts, and medals. He conversed in person, and corresponded by letter, with the most eminent scholars of his age, on the continent and in England. To many persons employed on curious researches, he generously sent as a present scarce books, medals, &c. to the great diminution of his valuable collections. He assisted by his own labour many of the literati in their most celebrated works. Grotius acknowledged the great assistance given him by Peiresc in his famous book De Jure Belli et Pacis, in a letter to him dated January 11, 1624. His attention to the promotion of learning was prodigious and unremitted; which turn of mind gave occasion to Bayle to entitle Peiresc the Attorney General of the Republic of Letters. His funeral was attended by a numerous body of learned men; and the eulogies on his memory there recited were afterwards published in prose and verse, and in ten languages, under the title of Panglossia. His chief works are, "Commentarii rerum omnium memoria dignarum sua ætate gestarum; Liber de ludicris naturæ operibus; Mathematica et Astronomica varia; Linguæ Orientales, &c. et Indices librorum harum linguarum; Nummi Gallici, Saxonici, Britannici, &c."

ON THE PORTRAIT OF A LADY, AS CRUEL AS FAIR.

Pour Chloris on fit ce portrait;
Mais on n'y peut voir aucun trait
De ceux qui la rendent si belle:
Il lui ressemble seulement
Pour être insensible, comme elle,
Aux passions de son amant.

IMITATED.

The artist here design'd to trace
The magic charms of Chloe's face.
These traits no semblance can impart
Of the fair mistress of my heart,
Save that the ardent vows of love
Alike the lass and picture move.

A SINGULAR CUSTOM.

Formerly in Bearn, a province of France, a singular custom prevailed. When the wife was brought to bed, the woman arose, and her husband succeeded to her place, and to all the ceremonies attending that situation. I imagine that the people of Bearn received this custom from the Spani-

ards, of whom Strabo in his third book of Geography relates the same usage. The same ridiculous farce was acted among the Tibarenians*, according to Nymphodorus, in his admirable Scholia on Apollonius Rhodius, book ii. and among the Tartars, as Marco Paulo the Venetian relates, book ii. chap. 41; whose voyages are no longer considered fabulous, since more modern travellers have confirmed his accounts.

ADRIAN JUNIUS†.

Vossius told me that M. S***, known by his edition of some curious MSS. more than for his erudition, came expressly from

* Tibareni, a people of Themiscyra, in Cappadocia. Plin. vi. 4. et Dionys. 766.

† Adrian Junius was born at Horn in Holland, 1511. He was an eminent physician and profound scholar. Among his numerous works are a Greek and Latin Dictionary, containing 6500 words added by him; and various commentaries on Seneca, Pliny, Virgil, Horace, Nonius Marcellus, and Suidas. Besides these works, his Nomenclator exhibits wonderful diligence and erudition. It is said that he understood eight languages; viz. Greek, Latin, Italian, French, Spanish, German, Flemish, and English: which species of knowledge he had much improved by his extensive travels into various countries. —Bayle, Art. A. Junius.

his own country to visit Adrian Junius. On calling at his lodgings he was informed that Junius was at a public house, carousing with some carmen. M. S***, in great disgust conceived at this account, left Holland without calling on Junius any more. When that illustrious scholar was told of these circumstances, he pleaded as an apology for keeping the company of carters, that he frequented their society for the purpose of learning the terms of their language.

ERASMUS'S DEVICE ON A RING.

I saw, in the possession of M. Vossius, a copper medal well executed, representing on one side the person of Erasmus, and on the other side the figure of the god Terminus, with this motto, "Concedo nulli Terminus*," which was likewise engraven

* "I Terminus yield to no one." These words, used by Erasmus as a device on his ring, allude to the following circumstance in the Roman history. Before the building of the Capitol, all the temples of the other gods were desecrated, except that of Terminus the god of boundaries. See Livy, book i. chap. 55.—Terminus, by a metaphor, signifies death, as the end or boundary of life:

Quandoquidem vitæ depactus Terminus, &c.

Lucret. lib. ii. l. 1096.

on his ring. A Spanish Cordelier named Carvajel reproached Erasmus with arrogance, for insinuating by this device that he would yield to no one in learning. Erasmus in answer explained the motto with his usual dexterity; saying, that the intent of it was to remind him of death.

FREDERIC MOREL*.

Vossius told me the following story of this great scholar and eminent printer. Whilst he was employed on his edition of Libanius, one day he was told that his wife was suddenly taken ill. "I have only two or three sentences to translate, and then I will come and look at her." A second message informed him that she was dying. "I have only two words to write, and I will be there as soon as you," replied Morel. At length he was told that his wife was dead.

* Frederic Morel died in 1630. He succeeded his father Frederic as printer to the King of France, which place his ancestors had long held and deserved by their diligence and learning. Frederic the son was superior to the father, and exceeded by no scholar whatever in his very ardent and extraordinary attachment to literature. His editions are very numerous and excellent.

"I am sorry for it, indeed: she was a very honest woman."

LOST DECADS OF LIVY.

M. Chapelain told me that a friend of his, a man of letters, perceived on a racket, with which he was playing, some fragments of the decads of Livy written on the parchment, and which were not known to the editors of that historian: and that his friend traced the discovery to the house of an apothecary, who had received them as a present from the nuns of Fontevraut, and through ignorance of their nature had sold them to a maker of rackets. This singular discovery reminds me of that made by Poggius, whilst he attended the Council of Constance; in which place, at the house of a hog-butcher, he found the MS. of Quintilian.

QUEEN CHRISTINA.

M. Vossius told me, that one day, when the Queen of Sweden had attended to a long harangue, which very much fatigued her, and at the conclusion was requested

to shew her liberality to this pertinacious orator, Christina replied, " I will reward him very willingly, as I am much obliged to the gentleman for the end of his speech."

END OF COLOMESIANA.

SCALIGERANA.

SKETCH

OF THE

LIFE AND WRITINGS

OF

SCALIGER THE YOUNGER.

———Ingenuas didicisse fideliter artes,
Emollit mores, nec sinit esse feros.

OVID.

Learning, if deep, and useful, and refin'd,
Communicates its polish to the mind.

THE subject of the following biographical sketch was a strong and conspicuous exception to the above beautiful but fallacious sentiment. Every one would wish the aphorism to be just; but there are few,

who with painful and minute attention have observed the varieties of the human mind, that will not doubt the truth of it. Consciousness of superiority, whatever be the claims to pre-eminence, will in most minds produce an haughtiness of manner, equally averse from humility, politeness, and delicacy. Joseph Scaliger, son of Julius Scaliger, was born at Agen, the 4th of August 1540. In his love of letters, though not in genius, he at least equalled his father; in erudition he excelled him. The education of Joseph Scaliger was early and regular; and his application, throughout his whole life, intense and without intermission. Secluded from the world, and deprived of the advantages of polished society, confident in the uncommon powers of his mind, and conscious of the daily progress of its cultivation, Scaliger became sullen, unsocial, proud, arrogant, and domineering. It is a trite remark, that a scholar is best known, and most advantageously exhibited, in his literary character and productions. The truth of this axiom is fully illustrated in Scaliger.

As a learned man he demands our highest admiration. He pretended to a skill in thirteen languages*. His method of teaching himself the Greek tongue deserves our attention. Determining to be his own master, he shut himself up in his closet, and in a hasty manner ran over the Greek conjugations; and applying himself to Homer, with the assistance of a translation, he soon gained great knowledge of that author: and from his observations in reading, he then composed a grammar of the Greek tongue for his own use, and with this guide he proceeded to read the other Greek poets, historians, and philosophers; and in two years, by the most austere application, he gained a very considerable and uncommon insight into that most copious language. To the sciences, and other branches of learning, he attached himself with the same perseverance and the same success. Talents so prodigious, and diligence so extraordinary, procured

* Hebrew, Greek, Latin, French, Italian, Spanish, German, Arabic, Syriac, Chaldaic, English, Persian, and Æthiopian.

to Scaliger the universal and merited character of the first scholar of his age. The reader however will not suppress a smile at hearing the pompous flatteries bestowed on this great man by the humble retainers of literature. The Abyss of Erudition, the Ocean of Science, the Chief Work, the Miracle of Nature, were the soothing terms which petty contemporary scholars bestowed on Scaliger, either to conciliate his favour, or to deprecate his caustic censures. Of the Fathers of the Church, Scaliger seemed neither to venerate the characters, nor to respect the talents and acquisitions. In the terms of *Scaligerian* criticism, Origen is a dreamer, St. Basil a proud fellow, St. Jerome a blockhead, St. Chrysostom an arrogant scoundrel, &c. He calls all Lutherans barbarians, and the Jesuits asses. Scaliger had embraced the doctrines of Calvin at the age of twenty-two. Destitute of any amiable quality of mind, and a stranger to every elegance and propriety of manners, Scaliger deplored all his life-time the want of patronage and the straitness of his circumstances. Never-

theless Scaliger had great virtues. His integrity was sound, his love of independence inflexible, his temperance and sobriety unchangeable, and his diligence unexampled in the annals of literature. His vices were the vices of a solitary student, and his virtues the virtues of a respectable and honourable citizen. The productions of so much genius, learning, and labour, were, as it might be expected, voluminous. Classic literature is much indebted to the toil and the sagacity of Scaliger. But his most celebrated work is entitled, "Opus de Emendatione Temporum," an Attempt to ascertain Chronological Science; the best edition of which is that printed at Geneva, 1609, folio. Scaliger was peculiarly qualified to undertake an inquiry of such importance and extent: the truth of which assertion will appear, if we consider the sources of his erudition. 1. Scaliger brought to this subject great skill in the Oriental, Greek, and Latin languages; and an extensive acquaintance with various authors, who could assist him in fixing the principles of

chronology, and ascertaining the dates of remarkable events. 2. He was the first scholar who undertook to form a complete system of chronology, or to lay down certain principles, on which history might be digested into exact order. 3. He invented the Julian period, which is considered as the polar star of chronologists. Scaliger attended to the strictures of Petavius on this his favourite work; and is allowed to have obviated the severe strictures of his adversary by another publication, entitled Thesaurus Temporum, the best edition of which was printed at Amsterdam, in 1658, 2 vols. folio. Scaliger died, aged sixty-nine, at Leyden, in 1609; where he had occupied the professor's chair for the space of sixteen years.

SCALIGERANA.

MASORITES.

Is a term among the Hebrews, which answers to the word Critics among the Greeks. They arranged the loose and unconnected rules of grammar into a regular order, and enriched the sacred Writings, by affixing to them Hebrew points, to serve as vowels; a circumstance essential to the Hebrew tongue. Their critical writings exhibit the various readings, and collect the analogous passages of the Hebrew books. Masorah signifies with them Criticism; and contains their body of annotations, &c.

LUCAN.

Lucan displays a most vehement and tremendous genius in poetry. He is too

enthusiastic: he could restrain himself by no bounds. He seemed little acquainted with the essential rules of constructing a poem.

THE HEBREW LANGUAGE.

In learning this language we experience the contrary of what we perceive at our commencing the Greek. In the former we find the beginning very easy, and the progress very difficult; insomuch that I do not know any person of this age that can be said to be a good Hebraist.

LEXICONS.

Those of Hesychius and Erotianus are of great use in the studying of Hippocrates. The former took great pains in investigating and explaining the terms and phrases of Hippocrates. The latter was an eminent grammarian. Hesychius is indeed only an epitome of a lexicon, as it is without any references or quotations.

QUINTUS CURTIUS.

Quintus Curtius is a valuable author;

but it is a long time since he was lost. What remains of him was transcribed from a single copy, and all the MSS. are modern. In the library of St. Victor at Paris, I saw a first book of Quintus Curtius, which I soon discovered to have been the composition of Petrarca.

LOVE OF POETRY.

The love of poetry is never joined with a feeble and disingenuous mind; but indicates talents of uncommon magnitude, and forms the great delight of persons so illustrious. No one ever was a poet, or an admirer of poetry, that was not an honest man.

MANUSCRIPTS, HOW VALUED.

Manuscripts distinguished by being of a square form are most authentic. Greek letters written in capitals are proofs of the great antiquity of those manuscripts. None have any claim to our attention, that do not bear date of more than five hundred years of age.

SWALLOWS.

There are four kinds of swallows: 1. the common swallow: 2. those which Aristotle calls apodes, or feetless, and which the moderns call martinets or martins, distinguished by their small feet, and by their hiding them from the sight: 3. those who build their nests near the sea-shore: 4. those of a smaller kind, which are found under the roofs of churches, &c. All of them during the winter remain in a torpid frozen state, and revive or awake in the spring.

TRICK OF A POPISH PRIEST.

A priest in a village in Spain had a garden, the wall of which was contiguous to an altar, on which was placed a crucifix that leaned against the wall. He contrived, at the time in which his vine was dropping, to introduce a sprig of it into the eyes of the crucifix, by means of an hole made through the adjoining wall; by which contrivance the statue appeared to shed tears. When the vine ceased to drop, the strata-

gem was carried on by means of oil. Many superstitious persons crowded to see this prodigy, to which sight they were admitted on paying a certain sum. The trick was for some time very lucrative. At length it was discovered: and the priest, with forty other accomplices, was executed in the adjacent town.

THE USE OF PHILOLOGICAL STUDIES.

I wish I were a skilful grammarian. No one can understand any author, without a thorough knowledge of grammar. Those who pretend to undervalue learned grammarians, are arrant blockheads without any exception. From whence proceed so many dissensions in religious matters, but from ignorance of grammar?

CHRONOLOGY.

Astronomy is the foundation of chronology; and the modern mathematicians are all asses, and ought not to be ranked among men of letters, but among mechanics. They make many observations, indeed, but are not conversant with good

MOSAIC WORK.

The term, though common, is wrong. It should be spelled *musaic*, as the Greek word from whence it originates requires. The Greeks called this kind of work musaic, from the very exact junction of the various parts. An arrangement so contrived appeared analogous to the sounds in musical compositions; which, though various in themselves, were rendered harmonious by the art of the musician.

MUSÆUS.

The Greek author of that name is not the same who lived in the time of Homer. My father put too great a value on Musæus, and preferred him even to Homer. My father knew very little of the Greek language. Musæus writes in a style of the ancient Sophists; but is not so pompous and inflated as Nonnus.

ARISTOPHANES

Is a most excellent author, valuable for his Attic phrases, and worthy of our greatest

attention. He who has not the writings of Aristophanes at his fingers' ends, can boast little knowledge of the Greek language. Terence bears the same eminent reputation for the purity of his style among the Romans, which Aristophanes supported among the Athenians.

CATULLUS, TIBULLUS, PROPERTIUS.

The first of these authors was the most scrupulous and the most rigidly attentive cultivator of the Latin language. The second is a very terse and elegant poet. The last, who is a very correct and very eloquent writer, deserves the pains which I have taken in correcting his text. These three poets may be entitled the Triumvirs of Love.

PHILOSOPHY.

In the early ages, Philosophy was confined to one department, viz. Physics; and continued thus during the period in which the Ionic sect flourished, the founder of which was Thales. Socrates, who is said to have drawn Philosophy from the clouds

to dwell on earth, introduced a second division, namely, that of Ethics. The third department of Philosophy is indebted for its origin to Plato, and assumed the title of Logic; which science, added to the two former, completed the boundaries of Philosophy.

ORIGIN OF ACCENTS AND POINTS.

The grave accents made use of in the printing of Latin authors, were introduced into practice in my time. But as they cannot be any assistance in marking the different meanings of the same words when pronounced, or distinguishing them as nouns and adverbs, they should be omitted in the Latin classics. The use of commas and semicolons was in my time invented by Manutius, and entirely unknown to the ancients.

EMINENT MODERN SCHOLARS.

There are three persons to whom the revival of literature in Italy has great obligations, who raise my envy of their superior talents. Theodore Gaza was a very learned

and sagacious man, though he has committed many errors in his translation of Aristotle on Animals. Angelus Politianus was an excellent poet and writer in all things but in his letters; the style of which is too inflated and rhetorical. I wish he had taken the epistles of Cæsar, Cassius, Plancus, Brutus, especially those of Cæcina and Marius, &c. inserted among those of Cicero, for his models. Pliny the younger is not to be compared with those I have mentioned; nor indeed is Cicero himself, as he often deviates from a simplicity of style. Picus of Mirandola completes this triumvirate.

MAXIM OF CATO CORRECTED.

Legere et non intelligere, nec legere est*, is the proper and just axiom of Cato. For nec legere, corrupted texts put negligere†. This error arises from an ignorance of ancient Latin MSS. where the transcribers frequently through inadvertence

* To read, and not to understand, is virtually not to read.

† To neglect.

substitute G for C, and so on the contrary; and likewise are guilty of making one word out of two, as in the above instance.

ETYMOLOGY OF DECREPITUDE.

The comparison of human life to the burning and going out of a lamp was familiar with Latin authors, as we know by the terms senes decrepiti. Plutarch explains the origin of this metaphor thus: The ancients never extinguished their lamps, but suffered them to go out of their own accord; that is, by the last crackle. Hence a lamp just about to expire was said *decrepitare*, to cease to crackle. Hence, metaphorically, persons on the verge of the grave were called decrepit men.

JULIUS SCALIGER.

My father used to say, that he could not comprehend the causes of three things: of the interval of an ague; of the motion of the sea; and of the nature of his own memory. When a person said to him, jocosely, "What, does not so learned a man as you are, know what becomes of a

fever during its fit of intermission?"—"Are you not a cunning fellow yourself," replied Scaliger, "to put a question so completely unanswerable?"

A LEARNED PRODIGY.

I heard in Italy of one Critchton*, a Scotchman, who at the age of twenty-one was assassinated by the orders of a Duke of Mantua. Critchton was an adept in twelve languages, deeply conversant with all the writings of all the Fathers, had read all the poets, and boasted a capacity of disputing on any given subject whatever. He no doubt was a prodigious genius, but worthy of our admiration rather than our esteem. He was half a madman. Princes love such extraordinary characters more

* For further particulars of Critchton the reader is referred to Mr. Pennant's Tour to Scotland, vol. i. p. 295. That diligent and entertaining writer quotes the accounts of Aldus Manutius, and of Joannes Imperialis, a physician of Vicenza, who were eye-witnesses of the extraordinary exhibitions of Critchton. Aldus Manutius says, that Buchanan was the tutor of this celebrated man. Mr. Pennant in his Tour has inserted some Latin verses written by Critchton, and an engraving of him from an original picture.

than they regard men of real and useful erudition. Manutius, in his preface to his Paradoxes which he entitles Critonio, gives an account of this literary wonder.

LYDIAT*.

This man was troubled with vapours and whims in his noddle. He has made a wonderful discovery of an Equinox, thirty-six days later than formerly, and founds his assertion on the authority of the antients. He cavils at Clavius and proves that he does not understand that mathematician.

PORTERS IN LITERATURE.

La Croix* du Maine is a dull fellow.

* Lydiat published "Defensio Tractatûs de variis annorum formis contra Jos. Scaligeri obtrectationem," London, 1607, 8vo. Scaliger, with his usual foul language, called Lydiat a beardless beggarly gelt priest. Lydiat was not less famous for his learning than his misfortunes, and was respected by the scholars of his age, and some foreign literati ranked him with my Lord Bacon. See A. Wood's Athenæ.

* Francis de La Croix du Maine was born in 1522, and published in 1584, "*La Bibliotheque Françoise,*" in folio, a new edition of which was given by *M. Monnoye,* at Paris, in 1772, 2 vols. quarto. The Bibliotheque is a catalogue of all authors who have written in the French language.

L'Avocat's Dict.

He arranged a multiplicity of letters from various persons, in little pigeon holes, in his study. I visited him one day and he observed of his pursuits, *oscura diligentia*, for he could not pronounce the *b*. Such men as he are the carriers of literature, and bring us home every thing; this is a great advantage to scholars, and such men as La Croix are useful drudges.

SLASHING CRITICS.

*Dalechampius**, though otherwise a scholar, in his edition of Pliny is very rash in his emendations; if he does not like this word or the other, he strikes it out of the text and inserts another perhaps worse, and this is the practice of many other critics. I never give into this practice unless the passage is notoriously depraved. My mode is to retain the old text, and note my

* James Dalechamps was a learned and eminent physician in the sixteenth century, and a native of Caen in Normandy, and exercised his profession at Lyons, where he died in 1588. He published a translation of Athenæus, 2 vols. folio, in 1562. An History of Plants in 1587, in 2 vols. folio; and, Notes on Pliny's Natural History, in 1587, in folio.

L'Avocat's Dict.

opinion of its doubtfulness in the margin, and give my judgment upon it; at the same time I leave the emendations of the text to more learned men who may come after me, who may perhaps be deterred from altering the words of the text inconsiderately, by following my cautious example.

ANTIENT DIVISION OF THE DAY.

What astronomers call the *artificial* day, was by the antients divided into twelve hours, and the night into the same. In their camps the night was divided into four *watches;* one to each quarter: which circumstance explains the line of Propertius, of the last quarter's watch. "Et quam quarta sonat venturam buccina lucem." The fourth trumpet proclaims the dawn of day.

DRUIDS OF GAUL.

When Julius Cæsar* relates that the Druids made use of the Greek language in

* In the Notes to Clarke's Cæsar, book vi. chap. 14. of the Gallic war of Cæsar, it is observed that many learned annotators have doubted of this passage with J Scaliger, but that Davisius and Cellarius have cleared away all objections. The words immediately following in the text, seem to coun-

their public and private accounts, "Græcis literis fere publicis privatisque rationibus utantur." I cannot help thinking that there is some interpolation in the text, and that the word "Græcis" should be omitted. For Cæsar means only to say that these civil matters were committed to writing, and that what respected religious affairs was entrusted entirely to memory.

PAUL JOVIUS*.

This writer abounds with falshoods, and is much inferior to Guicciardini. His style is too diffuse and luxuriant, and full of affectation, and every thing but simple.

tenance the word "Græcis."—"One reason of this," says Cæsar, "was because the common people were not admitted to exercise this function."

* Paulus Jovius was a celebrated historian in the sixteenth century, and a native of Coma in Lombardy. The Pope Paul III. refused him the bishoprick of his native place, though he very ardently sought after it. He exercised the profession of a physician first and then became a bishop of Nocera. Francis I. gave him a considerable pension which the constable Montmorenci took away from him. Jovius revenged himself on the constable in the thirteenth chapter of his history. As an historian his impartiality is much doubted by scholars. His history in 3 vols. folio, was edited at Basle, in 1578.

L'Avocat's Dict.

HEBREW LANGUAGE.

The Hebrew differs from the Chaldean and Syrian tongues only as the Italian does from the Latin. The characters are indeed very different and each differs very much from each other. From this obscurity of the letters and unknown figures, many authors lie dormant, which, if God permit, I will one day awake to light. I wish I knew the Arabic as well as I do the Syriac and Chaldaic, for many authors in Medicine lie hid among Arabian writers, especially Avicenna, &c.

EPIGRAM.

The following punning distich was written by Sannazarius on the two bridges built over the *Seine* by Giovanni Giocondo, an architect of Verona.

Jucundus geminos fecit tibi, *Sequana* pontes,
Jure tuum potes hunc dicere *pontificem**.

* The English reader need be informed that a bridge-builder in the Latin may be termed pontifex, which also is the high title of the Pope, and the epithet "pontifical" is of dignified import. In Maffei's "Verona illustrata" an account of this artist may be seen.

IMITATED.

Over the *Seine Jucundus* rais'd
Two bridges for their beauty prais'd,
And hence, Jucundus, we may call
Your noble works *pontifical.*

GOOD MANNERS

Are signified by the writers in civil law, by the expression, "Boni mores," and are applied to persons who cultivate the virtues of charity and temperance. Cornelius Celsus in his preface, says, the consequence of good manners is health, the offspring of temperance and exercise; and likewise gives the same praise to those who are moderate in wine. In short "good manners" are put in opposition to every vice of indulgencies and luxuries*.

RELIGION.

There are three strong passions of the mind, which are inimical to the influence

* Milton, whose life was led with great simplicity and truly platonic innocence, says "con amore" in his Penseroso.

"Spare fast that oft with Gods doth diet."

Lib. 46.

of religion on the mind; viz. Love, Avarice, and Ambition, which is stronger than the two former.

ARABIAN TONGUE.

The Arabians have two kinds of points, viz. vocal points in the room of vowels, and points which distinguish the same letters when they convey a different meaning. I have a Greek Arabic Dictionary, in which the Arabic has no discriminating points. It requires a great deal of erudition to make use of this Lexicon; and if it was not for the Greek annexed I could not have read it.

RAMUS*

Did not understand even his letters before he was nineteen years old. He was a servant, on his arrival at Paris, to M. de

* Peter Ramus (in French, de la Ramée) was a celebrated professor of France, and born in 1515, at Picardy, of poor parents. Bayle, from whom this account is taken, doubts, with great reason, Scaliger's account of Ramus's late initiation in literature, and the dulness ascribed to him. His genius for mathematics was eminent, and our great countryman Barrow, in his "Letters on the Mathematics," has in many places endeavoured to rescue Euclid from the strong censures of

la Brosse; but such was his love of learning, that he arrived at the character of a very eminent scholar in spite of the disadvantages of a slow, nay, dull intellect, and a late commencement of his studies. In his thirtieth year he wrote against Aristotle with more success than in his subsequent attempts. He was a skilful orator, but as he pointed out a new and unknown method of study, his style is rude and inelegant; a river of words, and a drop of intellect. He died in the town-house, at Paris, in 1572. The occasion of his death was his attachment to a more pure religion than he openly professed.

MEDALS AND INSCRIPTIONS.

In the study of these vestiges of antiquity we are precluded by ignorance from the contemplation of many very valuable articles of erudition. Antonio Agostini has

Ramus. His great works, in which he attacked the "Logic of Aristotle," and which set so many of his time against him, were entitled, "Aristotelicæ Animadversiones et Institutiones Dialecticæ." He died in the Massacre of St. Bartholomew.

See BAYLE's Dict.

published a Treatise* in Italian on this subject, with faults enough. The figure of genius should be naked; three legs are the arms of Sicily or Trinacria. The Emperors are represented laurelled; the Kings of Macedon with lions' skins over their heads, like Hercules; the Greek Philosophers have beards; the Roman Emperors, till Hadrian, are drawn without beards; Hadrian was the first Emperor who shaved; so did his successors; Seneca is therefore misrepresented with a beard, as he shaved according to the custom of his time, &c.

PROPER TIME TO CUT HAIR, &c.

If you cut the hair of your head or chin between the new and old moon, the excrescencies will more slowly be reproduced. The same observation holds with regard to cutting the nails. Varro† remarks

* Agostini's Treatise is entitled "Le Gemme Antiche figurate." *Rome*, 1686, 2 vols. 4to. They were afterwards reprinted by Maffei in 1707, 4 vols. 4to.—L'AVOCAT's Dict.

† See Varro Lib. i. "De Re Rustica" Agrasius, a speaker in the Dialogue, says that he never cuts his hair in the wain of the moon; or, in the words of Milton, when the moon is

"Hid in her vacant interlunar cave."

these circumstances, and I know them to be true by my own experience.

CORNARD OR CUCKOLD.

The French word derived from horns is applyed to those men whose wives are adulteresses. Perhaps the antients, wishing to ridicule men of this description, placed horns upon their heads when they found them napping, or something similar to them. I remember reading in an old author (Artemidorus) that he who dreamed that a ram approached him in his sleep, became in process of time a cornuto.

CRITICISM*

Is the noble and essential part of grammar and the true interpreter of authors. The real critic corrects corrupt passages, and gives to the authors their own works, and deeply searches into the various merits and demerits of poets, philosophers, ora-

* Scaliger has more diffusely entered into the very difficult duties of Criticism in his "Epistola ad Vert." p. 409, &c. but more especially in his treatise "De arte Critici ad R. Scriverium," ed. Lugd. 1619, 4to.

tors, &c. Critics are, in fact, the licensers of books. Varro, in his "Critiques," has told the world that only twenty-one Plays, out of many ascribed to him, appertain to Plautus. Aristarchus has appropriated the verses which were really written by Homer; and Calliopius has ascertained the true "Comedies of Terence."

MANILIUS.

No one can give so good an edition of this poet as myself; for he not only describes modern systems of Astronomy but the ancient also. One should be deeply conversant with authors to be convinced that Junius*, when he endeavoured to correct the text of this writer, was most egregiously absurd and erroneous.

BON MOT.

M** was the proudest man of his time and the most eminent scoundrel; he was insolent to every one, and was going to

* Bayle, in his "Life of Francis Junius," records the hatred which J. Scaliger bore towards Junius in his writings and conversations, and ascribes it to the objections which Junius had made to the sacred chronology of the dogmatical Scaliger. Bayle mentions, with respect, Junius's notes on Manilius.

kill a relation of his own for objecting to his arrogant conduct. In a quarrel with the Queen of Navarre he was told by that Potentate to quit her Kingdom immediately. He replied, with great hauteur, "That I can do in a very short time*."

IDEAS OF GENTILITY.

The grandson of a peasant has more rank than that of a merchant. A gentleman may mend his own shoes because he does it not for pay; this circumstance makes it mean. A gentleman in B—— used to follow his own plow, but was not esteemed ignoble on that account. In some parts of France the nobility are merchants, in other parts this employment would be a blot in their escutcheon.

BODLEIAN LIBRARY†.

A certain knight gave to the University

* This story seems to have given rise to a modern one. A Prince of Italy, whose Dominion was of small extent, ordered a person out of it in twenty-four hours. "The Prince has been liberal," replied the voluntary exile, "I can quit it in half an hour."

† The learned Doctor Hudson, the late librarian, gives this account of the Bodleian; "Sir Thomas Bodley asked permission

of Oxford a library which cost 120,000 crowns, or 40,000 livres sterling (a sterling livre is worth three crowns). He must have been a rich man. I received a catalogue of the books, which are generally very common ones.

EPIGRAM.

Sannazarius wrote the following lines on Platina's "History of Cooking," which followed his Lives of the Popes.

DE BARTHOL. PLATINA*.

Ingenio et mores vitasque obitusque notasse.
Pontificum argutæ lex fuit historiæ:

to furnish Duke Humphrey's library once more; which being granted, he procured benefactors from very many of the nobility and gentry, both in books and money. He sent over men on purpose to buy books in France, Italy, and Germany; besides this he made an agreement with the Stationers' Company to give one copy of every book, which they should print from thence forward. Lastly, by his will he left a considerable estate; though this was afterwards much diminished by the civil wars and fire of London, and now scarcely supplies the librarians with salaries," &c.

POINTER's Oxon. Acad. 1747.

* Bartholomew Platina was librarian to the Vatican in the time of Sixtus IV. He died in 1481. His history of the

Tu tamen hinc lautæ tractas pulmenta culinæ,
Hoc, Platina, est ipsos pascere pontifices.

IMITATED.

Your history so richly paints
The lives and deaths of these fam'd saints;
Securing each illustrious name
For learning, wit, the meed of fame;
To dub you, critics all agree,
Historian of the papal See;
But when you wrote your tract so rich in,
The various lux'ries of the kitchen;
They all then swore upon your book,
That you were then the papal cook.

THE FATHERS.

These writers despised the Hebrew tongue, and the Jewish teachers of it; and they put too much confidence in the authors of

Popes commences from St. Peter, and ends with Pope Sixtus IV. to whom he dedicated it. His treatise on the Science of the Kitchen was printed at Bologna in 1480. His celebrated History of the Popes at Venice 1479, in folio, Latin. This work established his character for erudition, wit, and freedom in narration.

L'Avocat's Dict.

the Septuagint, who are often very indifferent translators. The Fathers ought to have been taught by the Jews, and thereby they would have been enabled to have fought with them, and beat them at their own weapons. For these thirteen or fourteen centuries the Fathers have exhibited great proofs of want of erudition. The Jesuits wish to keep us in this ignorance and darkness. In theology the Fathers are of very little use.

PERSIUS, THE LATIN SATIRIST.

Persius is a most wretched author, and a fellow who studied to be obscure. He has very few beauties, but many fine commentaries might be made upon his text.

PINDAR.

This author contains many words which you can find no where else: they were of his own coining, and borrowed from other authors. Callimachus and Nicander were both very fond of introducing into their composition the most obscure and ancient, nay ridiculous words.

PROVERBS.

The Eastern nations are famous for proverbial sayings; so are the Greeks. In Latin we find fewer proverbs than in any other language. Among the moderns the Spanish have many very excellent sententious sayings.

SOPHOCLES

Is an admirable and the first of Greek poets, and almost superior to Virgil*. His Philoctetes is admirable: a barren subject beautifully amplified! The Œdipus Tyrannus, though it contains few characters, is yet very interesting. Who can read Sophocles is a good Grecian: many of his plays are lost.

PRETENDERS TO ERUDITION.

I am of the opinion of my friend Cujacius, to withhold the title of scholar from him whose learning is vulgar and moderate. There are persons who can construct a

* Scaliger preferred Virgil to Homer. See his Works.

syllogism, and argue very plausibly on most subjects with logical precision, and so claim the name of scholars. Others can express their thoughts elegantly and eloquently enough, but yet cannot justly be called (what they wish to be esteemed) erudite. These persons I altogether hold in small estimation, though I am angry with myself that I never acquired, by the use of public speaking*, a facility, or rather the power of uttering my knowledge in a popular way.

ANTIENT BATHS.

There were two kinds of baths among the antients: the common mode of bathing

* For this reason (namely, his incapacity for public speaking), Joseph Scaliger refused a professor's chair at Geneva, and made that his excuse for not accepting the honour, though he was conscious of his sufficiency in the faculty (philosophy) to which he was invited. His friend Cujacius, or Cujas, whose opinion he here adopts, was an eminent civil lawyer, which science he taught at Bourges in France, of which place he was a native. Such was his love of science, and liberality of mind, that he assisted his pupils with money to pursue their studies, and was on that account called the "Father of his Scholars." He died at Bourges 1590, at 70 years old. The best edition of his works, is that of Fabrot 1658, 10 vols. folio. L'Avocat's Dict.

was to pass from a tepid to a hot bath; from thence to a sweating room; and from thence into a cold bath, or the open river. The other mode was less used, viz. first they were heated by the sun; then they were rubbed and anointed with oil; afterwards they worked themselves into a sweat, and then flung themselves into cold water.

BOETHIUS*.

This author is thoroughly and diligently to be read, because he shines both as a

* Flavius Anicius Manlius Torquatus Severinus Boethius was an eminent scholar in the sixth century, and a man of rank by his birth, and dignity by his office. He was three times a consul. Soon after the invasion of Theodoric, king of the Goths, he was accused by that king of treason, and assisting Emperor Justin against his interest. Though his accusers were of the most infamous characters, his banishment from his country was determined on by Theodoric. His early education was at Athens. His consolation of philosophy is his great work, and the merit of this composition cannot be doubted, since it has the praise of Scaliger, and was translated by Chaucer. The last translator was a Scotch nobleman in the reign of James II. A singular concurrence that Lord Preston was imprisoned for treason, and translated the work under the same circumstances under which it was originally written.

BAYLE's Dict.

philosopher and a poet. His Latin style is in imitation of the latinity made use of in the time of Nero.

ARETÆUS*

Was a most eminent Greek physician, and wrote in the Ionic dialect. His description of diseases is full and accurate. From his minute descriptions of particular maladies, he is a very useful interpreter of the text of Hippocrates.

CICERO AND PLUTARCH.

I have little or no value for the philosophical writings of the Roman orator. There are no passages in them which carry the least appearance of demonstration, instruction, or forcible reasoning. I look

* Authors are divided about the time in which this eminent Cappadocian lived. Some placed him long before Julius Cæsar, and others with more probability under the reign of Trajan. The best edition of his works is, that of Boerhaave in 1735, in folio, Greek and Latin. The modesty of Aretæus induced him to confine his attention to describe accurately the symptoms of diseases, rather than the causes of them.

L'Avocat's Dict.

in vain into them for the close and energetic style of Aristotle. I am nearly of the same opinion about Plutarch's philosophical genius; it seems more calculated for men of the world, than for the perusal of scholars.

LONDON BRIDGE*.

There used to be a great number of human heads upon this bridge, before the King (James I.) ordered them to be taken away. I have seen fixed on poles that looked like masts of vessels, the limbs, &c. of men.

* Pennant speaking of London Bridge, mentions a tower which guarded the drawbridge, and says, "The top of this tower, in the sad turbulent days of this kingdom, used to be the shambles of human flesh, and covered with heads and quarters of unfortunate partizans. Even so late as 1598, Hentzner, the German traveller (Fugitive Pieces, Vol. II. p. 243.) with true German accuracy, counted on it above thirty heads. The old map of the city, 1597, represents them in a most horrible cluster."

PENNANT's London, 1790.

END OF SCALIGERANA.

MENAGIANA.

SKETCH

OF THE

LIFE AND WRITINGS

OF

MENAGE.

GILES MENAGE was born at Angers, August 15, 1613. For his multifarious knowledge he was called the Varro of the seventeenth century. His application to polite learning was vehement and early. He was, in the beginning of his career, a barrister at law. His pleadings, which were distinguished by the importance of their subjects, and the ability with which

they were conducted, added much to his reputation as a lawyer, but not to his partiality for the profession. He soon quitted it; and, entering into the church, obtained some benefices, among which was the deanery of St. Peter at Angers. Menage was possessed of a most tenacious memory, which he retained, except during a short interval, to a great age. Among his Poems, published at Paris in 1652, are two written in Latin: one of which is addressed to Memory, petitioning the goddess to restore to him her former favours; the other pours forth his gratitude for the welcome return. The former attests this wonderful faculty in Menage: "O Mnemosyne, dost thou withdraw thy patronage from me, thy faithful client? Alas! I remember in my youth that I could have recited the names of a thousand philosophers, and of a thousand sects. But I have forgot all these names: I scarce remember my own. I could have repeated great part of Ovid, Homer, and Virgil," &c. This uncommon talent of memory made Menage a

very agreeable companion to the ladies; among whom he was happy to be often seen, and for whose amusement he repeated, with great readiness and humour, all the anecdotes, verses, &c. which he thought would entertain the company. His works are very numerous. The most important and principal are the following: Origines de la Langue Françoise, Paris, 1650, in 4to. Miscellanea, Paris, 1652, 4to; a collection of several pieces in Greek, Latin, and French, both prose and poetry, composed chiefly by himself. Diogenes Laertius, Græce et Latine, cum Commentario, published at Amsterdam in 1692, in 2 vols. 4to. Origini della Lingua Italiana, Paris, 1669, 4to. The Menagiana were published after the death of M. Menage, by the care of one of his friends, M. de la Monnoye, at Paris, 1715, 4 vols. 12mo. This collection M. Bayle, in his Dictionary, commends very highly, as well calculated to inform posterity of the lively genius and useful talents of M. Menage. That acute writer has applied the following passage of

Aristotle to the Menagiana: "We discover frequently more proofs of design and intelligence in the structure of smaller animals, than are to be found in those of larger dimensions." Aristot. Hist. Anim. book ix. chap. 7.

MENAGIANA.

THE MAN OF VIRTUE.

THE two grand constituent principles of this character are, a sound intellect, and an upright mind. Either quality alone is insufficient to produce a man of virtue. He must praise with warmth the good actions of his rival and enemy; he must speak of their faults without pride or ill-nature. He must not exaggerate the merits, or extenuate the defects, in the conduct of his friend. Such virtue must be the result of the combination of a sound intellect and an upright mind. The one is a quality of the head, which defends us from error; the other from the influence of our passions, be they good or bad. Unless a person is possessed of both, he may be a man of understanding, but a

slave to his passions; or honest, but deficient in sagacity. The former character may be vicious with design; the latter through ignorance and simplicity. But the conjunction of a sound head and an honest heart forms a completely virtuous man; too wise to be deluded by error, and too firm in his principles to be shaken by passion.

VERSES SENT TO A YOUNG LADY, AS A NEW YEAR'S GIFT.

Je n'ai que de beaux noms à donner pour étrène,
Choisissez de "mon cœur," de "mon tout," de "ma reine,"
D' "objet charmant et doux," de "mon bel œil vainqueur,"
De "ma lumière," de "ma vie."
Le choix dépend de votre envie,
Mais, si vous m'en croyez, vous retiendrez "mon cœur."

May names, inspir'd by ardent love,
As gifts, your grateful bosom move;
"My heart," "my lovely queen," "the prize,"
"The life," "the light of these fond eyes:"

Choose which you will, they all are due,
Exclusively, dear girl, to you.
But, might I act th' adviser's part,
Fair Iris, you'll accept " my heart."

ON THE DISPUTES CONCERNING THE SUPERIORITY OR INFERIORITY OF THE ANCIENT TO THE MODERN WRITERS.

In regard to controversies of this kind, I entirely agree with the decision uttered by Sidonius Apollinaris*: " Legebat cum reverentia antiquos, et recentes sine invidia." He read, he says, the ancients with admiration, and the moderns without prejudice.

THE USE OF CATALOGUES.

A friend of mine, a man of sense, very much surprised me, by asking me once of what use a catalogue of a library could be. " You may imagine," replied I, " that persons who publish catalogues of their libraries are induced to it by ostentation,

* See his Works, published by Father Sirmond in 1652, 4to.

and the love of making a parade of the quantity of books they have collected. We cannot easily penetrate the motives of others; yet, however slight our inclination to reading may be, if their collection is a judicious one, we are much obliged to them for publishing a catalogue. Men of learning, who are well acquainted with good books, are glad to know where they are; and those who are less informed, are glad so easily to gain the information of choice authors. This last description of students, by reading over the titles of books, of which they were before ignorant, become conversant with various writers, who may be useful to them in the pursuit of those studies, to which their own turn of mind may lead them. Tutors in schools and universities would do well in pointing out to their pupils the different authors, who treat of the arts and sciences either in a general way or in detail. For without these useful and easy directions, young students of ingenuity and diligence are totally ignorant of many branches of knowledge, and of many good authors who have

treated on them, to which otherwise they would readily have applied themselves. For my own part, I have great delight in poring into authors, who give me an account of books which are lost; and I have indulged my curiosity frequently in Diogenes Laertius, the Lexicon of Photius, in Athenæus, and the ancient scholiasts."

ANECDOTE OF A MONK.

A monk, who acted as librarian to his society, being employed to make a catalogue of the books, on taking up an Hebrew author, of which tongue he was completely ignorant, was a long time at a loss to describe the volume. At length he inserted it in the catalogue, under the title of a book, which had the beginning where the end should be.

VERSES SENT TO A LADY, WITH OVID'S METAMORPHOSES.

A IRIS.

L'ingénieux Ovide étale en cet ouvrage
Un nombre merveilleux de changemens divers.

Progne de l'hirondelle y prend le noir plumage :
Et Daphné s'y revêt de rameaux toujours verts :
Hermione en serpent y rampe sur l'herbe :
En lionne Atalante y court dans les déserts :
On voit Narcisse en fleur y parer le rivage :
On voit en épervier Nise y fendre les airs.
Une métamorphose à mes yeux favorable
Doit ici vous donner une place honorable ;
Iris, vous n'êtes plus rebelle à mes amours :
La rigueur a chez vous fait place à la tendresse :
C'est assez, n'allez pas redevenir tigresse ;
Ayant changé si bien, ne changez de vos jours.

TO IRIS.

Th' ingenious bard, whose aim is to surprise,
Presents the various changes to your eyes :
Here Progne takes the swallow's sable plumes ;
Here Daphne in a laurel ever blooms :
Hermione darts forth the serpent's hiss ;
Proud Atalanta roars, a lioness ;

Near his lov'd streams a flow'r Narcissus grows;
Quick on an hawk's bold pinion Nisus rose.
With not less wonder, but with more delight,
A change in you of late has bless'd my sight.
Dear Iris, now no more, with clouded brows,
And mien imperious, you disdain my vows:
Mild as a lamb, a tigress fierce before;
Now chang'd so well, dear Iris, change no more.

ANECDOTE OF DON FRANCISCO QUEVEDO*, AUTHOR OF THE VISIONS.

Quevedo, according to the account of the writer of his life, was lame, by both his feet being turned inwards. To conceal this deformity, he used to wear a long gown. Once in company by chance he discovered one of his feet; and observing a lady who saw it winking to the rest of the company, that they might take notice of it, "Ladies," exclaimed the philosopher, "you have great reason to laugh at

* See his Life, published in 1683, in 8vo. by Don Pablo Antonio di Tarsia.

this stump of a foot of mine: but I will lay you a wager that there is a much more deformed foot than this in the present company." A murmur arose on this speech through the whole circle; each man and woman looked at one another's feet. "It is concealed," says Quevedo; "but, to prove my assertion true, I will make the discovery." On saying which, he drew his gown aside, and displayed his other foot, which was still a more hideous object than that which they had seen.

THE WRITINGS OF PLUTARCH AND SENECA.

If all the books in the world were committed at once to the flames, there is no book which I should so speedily rescue from them as the works of Plutarch. This author never wearies me; and though I read him very frequently, I find at every turn new beauties in his pages. I do not find myself attached to Seneca in the same manner. There are indeed in his writings many admirable passages; but he will not bear a frequent and attentive perusal. It is better to quote him in the warmth of

conversation, than to read him in the silence of the study. Seneca continually aims at brilliancy of thought and diction in all his writings; and through this false ambition he descends into frivolity and bombast. Quintilian* has said wittily of this author, "You wish he had written with his own powers, under the direction of another's judgment." Cardinal Pallavicini†, in his treatise on Style, makes these strictures on the composition of Seneca: "Profuma i suoi concetti con ambra, e con un zibetto, che a lungo andare danno in testa:" He perfumes all his high-flown sentiments with amber and civet; insomuch that after some time the brain of his reader is disagreeably affected by the scent.

ANCIENT MEDALS.

M. Vaillant‡, the famous antiquary, made an observation to me on ancient

* Lib. x. cap. 1. Velles eum suo ingenio dixisse, alieno judicio.

† See his edition of Thirteen Letters, in 12mo. 1669, Rome.

‡ See an extract of M. Vaillant's Dissertations on Medals, now lost, in the Journal des Trevoux.

medals, which I never found in any author; namely, that those rivers which, together with their names, carried their waters to the sea, were represented on the medals by a figure wearing a beard: and that those which lost their names and streams in any other river, before they joined the seas, were exhibited by a figure without a beard, or assumed a female appearance.

AVARICE.

There is something truly disgusting in this powerful propensity of the human mind. In all other passions there is some pleasure to be pleaded for their indulgence; but this is composed solely of anxiety, chagrin, and apprehensions. Lord Bacon says wittily of misers, that gold is a good servant, but a bad master. The following verses on an old avaricious coquet are not amiss:

En vain tu mets du rouge, avare Léonore,
Ce fard n'empêche pas ton jaune de paroître.
Mais faut-il s'étonner qu'une esclave de l'or
Porte la couleur de son maître?

Clara, your toil is lost; nor white, nor red,
Can hide the jaundice o'er your visage spread:
Well with your soul those golden tints accord,
For yellow is the liv'ry of its lord.

A SINGULAR DISCOVERY OF A MURDER.

A priest in the province of A***, whose character was very vicious, had a violent quarrel with the bailiff of a neighbouring parish; and soon after the bailiff disappeared. A general suspicion arose, that the priest, his notorious enemy, had destroyed him. It happened not long after, that a robber was hanged in chains in a village not far distant from that in which the priest lived; and that the thief's relations stole away the body, and sunk it in an adjacent pond. Some fishermen took it up in their nets; and a justice, attended by a crowd of people, came to view the body. It was much disfigured, and every person cried out, that it was the bailiff, who had been a long time missing. The priest was arrested, tried, and condemned. Some time previous to his execution, he

confessed that he had murdered the bailiff, but added, "I am unjustly condemned, and the witnesses against me are perjured. The body of the bailiff lies now in such a place in my garden, in which I committed the murder. You will find the body of the bailiff, and that of his dog lying by him." The judges ordered the place in the garden to be searched; and the murdered bailiff and his dog were discovered in a putrid state, on the spot the priest had pointed out.

ANECDOTE OF A SPANISH AMBASSADOR.

The members of the Royal Society in London, desirous of making some Torricellian experiments on the Peak of Teneriffe, applied to the Spanish Ambassador for letters of recommendation to those islands. The Ambassador received the deputation from the society with great politeness; and taking them for merchants, who wished to purchase some Canary wines, he asked them for what quantity they meant to engage. The deputies informed the ambassador that their voyage was not to be

undertaken for the sake of traffic, but in order to measure the air in that climate. "Are you going to measure the air?" replied the Spaniard; and very abruptly dismissed them, convinced in his own mind that they were madmen. He hastened to Whitehall, and told every one he met of this extraordinary visit: but hearing that the King and the Duke of York were at the head of these madmen, he very prudently for the future kept silence on this subject.

M. DE LA BRUYERE.

This author may justly be esteemed an original genius. No writer before him has displayed such force and propriety of expression. He delivers his meaning as fully in one word as another could in six. His principal merit is, that though his expressions are very bold, yet they are very correct, and convey his sentiments with great felicity of diction. His faculty of detecting the ridiculous part of a character, and of describing it, is truly admirable. His portraits, though wrought up to the utmost extent of art, yet overstep not the

modesty of nature. I doubt whether any writer will hereafter attempt an imitation of La Bruyere with any success, so peculiar is the genius of this author. His translation of the Characters of Theophrastus is in every respect excellent, and shews his profound knowledge of the Greek language. In his translation I have discovered more beauties than my want of attention perhaps would permit me to see in the original. La Bruyere's character of Menalcas, the absent man, is generally supposed to describe Count Brancas. A singular anecdote of the Count, very characteristic of the peculiar defect in his mind, is omitted by La Bruyere. One day, whilst Brancas was reading by his fireside with much attention, the nurse brought to him his infant daughter. The Count laid down his book, and took the child into his arms; and was toying with it, when a servant announced the approach of a visitor of consequence. Brancas, forgetting that it was his child, and not his book, which he then held in his hand, flung the infant very hastily and carelessly

on the table. The nurse, who stood by, very luckily saved it from a fall, by catching the child in her arms.

ANECDOTE OF GROTIUS.

When this excellent writer and man was confined by the Prince of Orange in the castle of Louvestein, with his friend Barneveldt, on the suspicion of favouring the sect of the Arminians, he obtained permission to have his books sent to him. After some time, the guards neglected to examine the boxes, as they came in and were carried out. His wife placed Grotius in one of the empty boxes that was going out, and he was safely in this manner extricated from his confinement. Some soldiers, whilst they were carrying the chest, observed, that it was as heavy as if an Arminian had been in it. Grotius, however, after much apprehension, escaped. The following verses were made to celebrate so fortunate an elopement. The arca, or chest, in which he was concealed, is alluded to by the author:

Hæc ea, quæ Domini solita est portare libellos
Grotiadæ fuerat pondere facta gravis;
Mutatum neque sensit onus, quod enim illa ferebat,
Id quoque, sed spirans bibliotheca, fuit.

This chest, which to its master did convey
Full many a massy volume ev'ry day,
Unconscious now of greater weight and cares,
A living library in Grotius bears.

Grotius told me (M. Menage) the circumstances and manner of his escape. It happened in the year 1662.

The following Latin hendecasyllables contain an ingenious answer of a gouty Epicure to the remonstrances of his Physician:

Tentatum podagra senem Vacerram,
Nec vini tamen abstinentiorem,
Visens Archigenes, Amice, dixit,
Cado parcere, si sapis, memento;
Fons est ille tuæ unicus podagræ.
Audivit placide senex monentem,

Et grates, specie probantis, egit.
Verum post aliquot dies reversus
Ad ægrum medicus, scyphos ut illum
Vertentem reperit meraciores:
Eho, quid facis? inquit. At Vacerra,
Fontem sicco meæ, ut vides, podagræ.

Chalkstone was dying of the gout,
But still would see his bottle out.
"Old friend," the doctor oft would say,
"I wonder you're alive to-day.
Wine is the deadly fount, whence flows
This torrent of arthritic woes.
Be sober, my advice is mild."—
The wily patient bow'd and smil'd.
Some few days past, the doctor came,
Found Chalkstone's visage all a flame;
Who, emptying a large decanter,
Began the doctor thus to banter:
"Soon, Galen, all my pains must fly;
For, see! the fatal fount is dry."

BALLADS.

A collection of the popular songs of the times constitutes a very useful and necessary

part of an honest and faithful history. In ancient Rome, when a triumph was decreed to a general, the soldiers in their march used the liberty of singing ballads, which openly related or plainly alluded to the actions or character of their victorious commander. Livy * in several passages of his history mentions these military songs, and describes them abounding in ribaldry and licentiousness, but has given no specimen of any one. Such quotations would not have accorded with the grave and majestic tone of his narration. Suetonius, and subsequent historians of a less severe character, particularly memorialists, have not rejected these ludicrous but edifying parts of their relations. It requires judgment indeed to select those songs only which shall not weary the reader by their length, or disgust by excess of ribaldry. The knowledge of ballads is useful to the narrator, when he confines their insertion to those solely which are applicable to the point he is then employed upon; as from

* See book iii. chap. 29.

these he may frequently make a discovery of some more important fact.

ANECDOTE OF PRAXITELES, THE CELEBRATED GRECIAN SCULPTOR.

Pausanias relates in his "Attics" a singular story of this ancient and eminent artist of Greece. The sculptor had promised two of the finest statues he possessed to his favourite mistress. The lady, in order to discover on which two of his collection Praxiteles placed the highest value, practised the following stratagem. She sent a message to inform him, that a fire had burst out very near his cabinet. The artist immediately exclaimed, "I hope they will rescue the Cupid and the Satyr from the rage of the flames." His mistress some time after asked these statues of her lover, who could not extricate himself from his rash promise.

ANGER.

The following noble sentiment and reflection on this turbulent passion of man is taken from the nineteenth chapter of

Seneca's treatise of Clemency: "Iracundissimæ apes aculeos in vulnere relinquunt. Utinam quidem eadem homini lex esset; ut ira cum telo suo frangeretur: nec sæpius liceret nocere quam semel, nec alienis viribus exercere odia." I wish that the anger of man was restrained within the same limits as that of bees. His fury would then subside with the blow which it inflicted. The power of wounding would last but for one time; nor would man then be able to support his love of revenge by any other agency than his own.

HOMER.

The most comprehensive and the most appropriate praise that was ever bestowed on this celebrated Greek poet, is contained in the following passage of Velleius Paterculus, book i. ch. 5. "Clarissimum deinde Homeri inluxit ingenium sine exemplo magnum: qui magnitudine operis et fulgore carminum solus appellari poeta meruit. In quo hoc maximum est, quod neque ante illum quem ille imitaretur; neque post illum qui eum imitari posset inventus est."

Then shone forth the genius of Homer with unrivalled effulgence. By the extent of his work, and by the splendour of his imagery and diction, he claims and deserves exclusively, of all other writers, the title of "the poet." In contemplating the genius of Homer, we should consider these circumstances as most redounding to his fame; that he had no predecessor, who could serve him as a model to form his composition; and that it bore such a character, as all succeeding poets have despaired of imitating.

MALBRANCHE AND DESCARTES.

The works of the former author were put into my hands, at a time when they enjoyed their highest reputation in the world. I never could relish his Treatise on Truth. The learned M. Petit called on me whilst I was reading Malbranche, and criticised his work with great bitterness of language. I never saw him so transported with anger before on any other subject. "Why," said he, "do they suffer such books as this of Malbranche to pass the press?" adding,

" though I am no way favourable to the philosophy of Descartes, I acknowledge that he had some apparent principles, on which he tried to build his system. But this Malbranche has laid the foundation of his structure in the air!"

BUCHANAN,

A native of Scotland, was born in 1506, and was a celebrated poet in his age. His verses are for the most part very excellent. The following lines on his mistress pleased me so much, that I attempted to imitate them in the Italian language.

Illa mihi semper præsenti dura Neæra,
Me, quoties absum, semper abesse dolet;
Non desiderio nostri, non mœret amore,
Sed se non nostro posse dolore frui.

PIETA CRUDELE.

Chi creduto l'avrebbe?
L'empia, la cruda Iole
Del mio partir si dole.
A quel finto dolore
Non ti fidar, mio core.

Non è vera pietade
Quella che mostra, nò, mà crudeltade.
Dell' aspro mio martire
La cruda vuol gioire,
Udir la cruda i miei sospiri ardenti,
E mirar vuole i duri miei tormenti.

IMITATED FROM THE LATIN.

Whilst at Anna's feet I'm kneeling,
Breathing forth my timid vows,
She, no kindred passion feeling,
Proud and scornful, knits her brows.

When I seek relief in flying,
Of my absence she complains:
Not with love, but malice sighing,
That no more she sees my pains.

ANECDOTE OF AN USURER.

M. L——, the famous usurer, during his illness frequently fell into fainting fits, which exhibited the appearance of immediate dissolution. His friends, by great attention, and by calling in very able physicians, for some time protracted his life, and procured to the patient symptoms of

returning health. One of these his confessor thought a good opportunity of reminding the sick man of his approaching fate. To effect this pious intention, he presented before the eyes of the expiring usurer a silver crucifix. M. L—— surveyed the cross with minute attention, and suddenly exclaimed: "Sir, I can lend you but a very small sum on such a pledge."

M. PASCAL*.

The two following passages in the writings of M. Pascal are striking for the acute observations which they contain. "Those minds which are capable of invention are very scarce; those to whom this power is denied, being much the greater number, are of course the prevailing party; insomuch that when works of invention come forwards, to claim the praise due to their authors, the public opinion treats them as visionaries." And again: "It seems rather a fortunate circumstance, that some common error should fix the wanderings of the human mind. For instance, the moon is

* Author of the Provincial Letters, born 1623.

supposed to influence the disorders of the human body, and to cause a change in human affairs, &c. which notion, though it be false, is not without its advantage: as men are thereby restrained from an enquiry into things to which the human understanding is incompetent, and from a kind of curiosity which is a malady of the mind."

EXTRACT FROM A SERMON OF AN AUGUSTINE MONK.

When the preacher had arrived at the passage in the New Testament, where the Evangelist describes the servants of the High-Priest warming themselves by the fire-side, he addressed his audience very solemnly, observing: "My brethren, ye are to notice that the Evangelist is not content to mention this circumstance merely as an historian would, by the words 'calefaciebant se,' they warmed themselves; but adds, in the spirit of a philosopher, the reason of their conduct, 'quia frigus erat,' because it was cold."

BONNEFONIUS.

Modern times have produced a very

good Latin poet. Bonnefonius was born in the reign of Henry III. of France. He has left behind him a collection of his poems, under the title of "Pancharis Johannis Bonnefonii," printed at Paris in 1587. This collection consists chiefly of verses written in praise of his mistress, and in hendecasyllables. The style of them is not unworthy of the Augustan age. Few poets since Catullus have succeeded in the composition of hendecasyllabic metre so well as Bonnefonius. The faults of his style are, excess of delicacy and want of energy. Catullus, on the other hand, displays a very masculine turn of expression; and, in the opinion of some cautious modern critics, too bold a phraseology. The following is, in my opinion, a favourable specimen of the versification, &c. of Bonnefonius.

VERSES ADDRESSED TO A NEEDLE, WHICH HAD FREQUENTLY WOUNDED THE HAND OF HIS MISTRESS.

Dic acus mihi, quid meæ puellæ
Illa candidula, illa delicata

Albis candidior manus ligustris,
Quid leves digiti, tenellulique
Tantum commeruisse, vel patrasse
Possunt, ut toties et hos, et illam
Configas stimulo ferociente?
Ah, ne molliculas manus inepta,
Ne leves digitos, et immerentes,
At pectus stimulo acriore punge;
Pectus, durius omnibus lapillis,
Durius scopulisque, rupibusque.
Hic stylum altius, altiusque fige;
Hic acuminis experire vires.
Quod si mollieris meam puellam,
Dii, quantam hinc referes superba laudem!
Hac te cuspide vulnerasse pectus,
Quod nullis potuit cupido telis.

To wound, rash needle, pray forbear,
A hand so delicately fair;
How could those fingers move your spite?
As lilies taper, and as white.
No more with barb'rous point invade
The harmless fingers of the maid:
Go, and with all your courage dart
Your spear-like fury at her heart;
Let her hard heart your anger feel,
And penetrating rage of steel:

And all your keen artill'ry plant
Against a breast of adamant.
Ah! should you force that fort to yield,
What honours wait you in the field!
The palm from Cupid you'll obtain,
Whose arrows oft have tried in vain.

The pleasure I received in the perusal of the poems of Bonnefonius, excited me to attempt a tale* in his manner, and in his style of versification.

CANTOR LACRYMAS ELICIENS.

Pagi non vafer admodum sacerdos
Solemnes operans sacris ad aras,
Festum Gargilius canebat hymnum,
Et quantum poterat, placere dum se
Amatæ putat auribus Lubinæ,
Tollebat resonans ad astra vocem;
Felix præcipue, sibique plaudens,
Quod certi velut indices amoris
Quasdam lacrymulas canens videret
Labi de teneris Lubinæ ocellis.

* This story is taken from the Tales, or "Facetiæ," of Poggius.

Hanc ergo rogitans, ut alloquendi
Data est copia: Dic, age, O venusta,
Quid flebas modo, me canente, quæso?
Parce ah quærere, parce, dixit illa,
Extinctus mihi nuper est asellus,
Qui non dissimilem tuæ subinde,
Tollebat resonans ad astra vocem.

THE PATHETIC PSALMODIST.

A priest, more fam'd for voice than wit,
Chaunted one day in such a fit
Of holy zeal, that all the quire
Such efforts could not but admire.
When the priest saw, with fond surprise,
The tears flow fast from Annett's eyes,
He could not doubt his pow'r to move
The streams of sympathy and love.
The service ended, he address'd
The nymph, and, whilst her hand he press'd,
Began to hint his am'rous fears:
Perhaps his singing caus'd her tears?
He own'd he all his pow'rs had tried.—
"Ah! spare my woes," the maid replied:
"I've lately lost—ah me!—alas!
How great the loss!—my fav'rite ass;

And when, Sir Priest, you sung to-day,
I thought I heard his well-known bray."

M. HUET, BISHOP OF AVRANCHES.

M. B*** observed to me the other day, that the poetry of M. Huet was very pretty. "The merit of his poetry," replied I, "is far above your praise. Your expression reminds me of the panegyric a person bestowed on the ocean, upon his first view of it, observing it was a *pretty thing*. M. Huet excels in Latin poetry. The Collection of his Poems, printed at Paris in 1709, in 12mo, does honour to our times. His verses display a purity of phrase worthy of the reigns of Cæsar and Augustus. In his Eclogues, which abound with original thoughts, the reader is happily reminded of Ovid and Claudian. In his Epiphora the style of Lucretius is successfully imitated. In his elegies he has taken Tibullus for his model. His Iter Suecicum, and his Odes, shew with how much attention and taste he had studied the works of Horace. In his short poem

on Salt, the versification of Ausonius is very happily adopted. It is most wonderful to observe, that though this writer's erudition was very various and very extensive, yet no obscurity of sentiment, no hardness of style or diction, can be discovered in any of his compositions. The same elegance, the same sprightliness and vigour, attended on the literary labours of his very advanced age*, which graced the earlier productions of his studious youth. It is astonishing to see in one man so much learning, and so much vivacity and fire, so long and so closely combined. M. Huet was a profound critic, an able philosopher, and a deep theologian. He was an accurate historian, an eminent linguist, and a correct and agreeable poet."

The following excellent verses on the love of play, are the composition of Madame Deshoulieres†:

* He continued to write beyond eighty years of age.

† Her Poems are printed in 2 vols. 12mo. Paris, 1764.

Les plaisirs sont amers si-tôt qu'on en abuse;
Il est bon de jouer un peu,
Mais il faut seulement que le jeu nous amuse:
Un joueur d'un commun aveu
N'a rien d'humain que l'apparence.
Et d'ailleurs il n'est pas si facile qu'on pense
D'être fort honnête homme et de jouer gros jeu.
Le desir de gagner qui nuit et jour occupe
Est un dangereux aiguillon.
Souvent quoique l'esprit, quoique le cœur soit bon,
On commence par être dupe,
On finit par être fripon.

IMITATED.

Amusement, which exceeds the measure
Of reason, ceases to be pleasure.
Play, merely for diversion's sake,
Is fair, nor risks an heavy stake.
The vet'ran gamester, void of shame,
Is man no longer but in name.
His mind, the slave of ev'ry vice,
Spawn'd by that foul fiend avarice.
Tho' with integrity and sense
The gamester may his trade commence,

The lust of gold will soon impart
Its subtle poison to his heart.
To each mean trick inur'd to stoop,
The knave soon supersedes the dupe.

THE ALEXANDREID, A POEM, BY PHILIPPUS GUALTERUS, OR WALTERUS*.

There are many single Latin lines which every scholar can quote very readily, but of which no person can ascertain the true author. Erasmus, in quoting a Greek proverb of similar import to the following well-known line, ends his disquisition on the subject with inserting it, at the same time declaring his utter ignorance of the author's name.

"Incidit in Scyllam cupiens vitare Charybdim."

Galeottus Martius de Narni, who died in 1476 (and of whom mention is made in the addition to the History of Louis XI. by Naudæus, chap. 5), first discovered that this line was in a poem called Alexandreis,

* This Poem was published at Lyons in 1558, in 4to, MS. character.

written by Philippus Gualterus, a poet of the fourteenth century. The verses with which the above line stands connected, are taken from the fifth book of that poem; wherein the poet, apostrophising Darius, who, flying from Alexander, was about to fall into the hands of Bessus, exclaims,

——Quo tendis inertem
Rex periture fugam? nescis, heu perdite, nescis
Quem fugias! hostes incurris dum fugis hostem:
" Incidis in Scyllam cupiens vitare Charybdim."

Death stands on either hand. Unhappy King,
In vain from one dread foe your flight you wing!
Still must you meet another's nearer shock,
And split, Charybdis past, on Scylla's rock.

CICERO.

This great orator must have had very excellent talents for conversation, since Julius Cæsar thought it a task not unworthy

his attention, to collect the apophthegms of Cicero. This great man boasted of the eminent services he had performed to his country; glorying in being conscious of the able discharge of a duty he owed to Rome as a faithful citizen. He has not claimed the honour of being the most eloquent public speaker of his age, though no one could have denied the fairness of his pretensions. He had sense of delicacy sufficient to prevent him from the disgust, which every one must excite, in claiming the merit of possessing talents superior to those of their contemporaries. How have we to regret the loss of Cicero's Treatise on Glory, written by a man who in all parts of his conduct displayed so ardent a love of renown! This complaint reminds us of the loss of a valuable Essay on Virtue, by Brutus, a man whose life was an example of spotless integrity. Seneca* is the only author who speaks of this treatise of the Roman patriot.

* See Consol. Lett. to Helv. chap. 9. Brutus in eo libro quem de Virtute composuit, &c.

DU CANGE'S DICTIONARY OF THE LATIN LANGUAGE, AS USED IN THE LOWER AGES.

Father Vavasseur* (whose studies had been exclusively employed on authors of the most acknowledged merit, and of the purest antiquity), upon the publication of Du Cange's Dictionary, observed, "I have been sixty years employed in learning to avoid every word and phrase of this industrious compilation."

DICTIONARIES AND LOTTERIES.

There cannot be more unequivocal proofs of the increase of ignorance and poverty in any nation, than the daily multiplication and frequent use of dictionaries and lotteries.

THE STYLE OF TERTULLIAN.

M. Balzac said of the phrase and composition displayed in the writings of this

* Francis, a Jesuit, an excellent Latin critic and poet. See Baillet's Jugem. des Savans. He died in 1681.

Father of the Church, that it resembled ebony, the darkness of which strikes the eye with dazzling splendour*.

PLAGIARISM.

I am much pleased with an expression of Seneca† on this subject: "Soleo enim et in aliena castra transire, non tamquam transfuga, sed tanquam explorator:" I even pass over into the enemy's camp; not as a deserter, but as a spy.

FRANCIS PANIGAROLA‡,

In his youth a cordelier, and afterwards created Bishop of Asti by Sextus V. Early in life he applied himself to the culture of Latin poetry. Some of his epigrams still remain, which exhibit great sprightliness and animation, though disgraced by careless and incorrect diction. I shall present the reader with the following epigram, with all its obvious inelegancies, as the sentiment

* See M. Balzac's Works, ed. fol. 2 vols. 1665. Elegies, Poetic Epistles, &c.

† Epist. ii.

‡ Born at Milan in 1548.

it conveys is tender and delicate. It was addressed to a convent where the poet's mistress was confined.

Ferra datis aditum cordi, reditumque negatis;
Quam sunt æqua parum vestra ministeria;
Vel date cor raptum, vel totum admittite corpus,
Si lubet, este dehinc irrevocabilia!

Ye bars, which to my heart once gave access,
Why now, unkind, its liberty repress?
Return my heart, or take my body too;
Then shut the world for ever from my view.

ANGELUS POLITIANUS*.

The letters of this eminent scholar, together with answers from his learned correspondents, collected into one volume, and divided into twelve books, deserve the attention of every lover of literature. The many choice anecdotes of the literary persons of those times, and the several precious

* A Latin poet, born in 1454, in Tuscany. The amplest edition of his Works was published at Basle in 1553, in 3 vols. 8vo.

relics of erudition, which this correspondence contains, merit an able translation. Would a man of genius and learning undertake such a work, and enrich it with notes, and illustrations of the less obvious passages, he would confer a great obligation on a numerous party of readers, and perform a signal service to the cause of literature in general.

JEROM AMALTHEUS*

Is the author of the following ingenious epigram, in which, by a poetical fiction, an hour-glass is metamorphosed into the tomb of a lover.

Perspicuo in vitro pulvis qui dividit horas
Dum vagus angustum sæpe recurrit iter,
Olim erat Alcippus, qui Gallæ, ut vidit ocellos
Arsit, et est cæco factus ab igne cinis.
Irrequiete cinis, miseros testabere amantes,
More tuo nulla, posse quiete frui!

* See Almalth. Fratr. Carmia. Venet. 1627, 8vo.

IMITATED.

The dust, which ceaseless winds its narrow way
Adown this glass, and marks the hour of day,
Was once the brisk Alcippus. Here he lies,
Reduc'd to calx by Gallia's scorching eyes!
In the dust's endless motion is exprest
A lover's mind, which never is at rest.

AN EXTRAORDINARY INSTANCE OF THE EFFECT OF GRIEF, AND THE LOVE OF LETTERS.

Ponticus Virunius, who edited the Greek Grammar of Chrysoloras (afterwards abridged and republished by his scholar Guarini), has added to the preface a Life of Chrysoloras, and inserted this singular anecdote of Guarini: "Guarini, a man of family in Verona, having accompanied a Venetian nobleman to Constantinople (being now of an advanced age), attended for five years, during his stay in that city, the Greek lectures of Chrysoloras. Preparing to return to his native country, he put two

chests of books, of which there were no other copies, aboard two different ships. One of the vessels arrived safe, but the other was cast away and lost. Guarini, on hearing this sad accident, felt so much grief at this irretrievable misfortune, that, during the space of one night, his hair was changed into a completely grey or white colour." This anecdote is taken out of that edition of Ponticus Virunius, which was preserved among Cardinal Mazarine's collection of scarce authors.

PERRUQUES.

On the introduction into France of these costly coverings of the head, men fond of dress, and of great nicety in this article of it, were observed in all seasons and weathers to parade the open streets with their hats in their hands, for fear of disturbing the well-arranged curls of their toupees. These foppish manners gave occasion to the following copy of verses.

AD PONTICUM.

Nuper forte gradu puer citato
Corœbus, puer et senator idem,

Ibat, Pontice, strata per viarum,
Et quanquam aspera bruma tunc rigebat;
Quanquam trux Boreæ furebat aura;
Olli, pileolo gravata nullo,
Sola cæsaries caput tegebat.
Omnes respicere, obstupere quidam,
Multi quinetiam notare longis
A tergo auriculis, ciconiisque,
Ineptam pueri protervitatem;
Qui tussimque malamque pituitam
Ultro quærere pergeret, minusque
Caput lædere, quam comam, timeret.
At vos ter potius quaterque ineptos,
Quicumque immeritis jocis procaces
Corœbum petitis! Sapit Corœbus
Vobis ingeniosior Corœbus,
Rerum æquissimus unus æstimator,
Caram perdere qui comam magis, quam
Nullius prætii caput, verctur.

IMITATED.

A youth, a senator and beau,
Corœbus, fond of dress and shew,
Tripp'd hastily along the street,
Braving the bleak north-wind and sleet,

With hat in hand; the foolish prig
Was anxious only for his wig.
All the spectators gape and stare,
And some begin to joke and sneer.
"See how he scorns the wind and cold!
Why, certainly, the lad is bold,
In spite of rheums, who shews a care
Less of his head than of his hair."
Critics, how narrow are your views,
Who thus this prudent youth abuse!
By a just value he is led
Both of his wig and of his head.
The one he knows was dearly bought,
The other would not fetch a groat.

CARDINAL RICHELIEU.

This great minister, though during so many hours each day immersed in state affairs, still dedicated some part of it to recreation. His favourite exercise, when alone, was leaping about his chamber with great violence and activity, and with as much secrecy as possible. One day M. de Grammont, who having married one of his nieces, had free access to the Cardinal at all hours, found him jumping very violently

in his gallery. M. de Grammont, versed in all the arts of a courtier, began himself to leap, and challenged his Lordship to a trial of skill in that exercise. The Cardinal, who was still a better courtier, understood the delicate flattery of M. de Grammont, and shewed him from that time many warm proofs of his attachment. The Cardinal likewise cultivated literature. His essay, called Testament Politique, besides being generally said to be the production of the Cardinal's genius, contains many secret memoirs, which could only be known to the Minister himself. Richelieu was very jealous and suspicious of the persons around him: and Desnoyers, his valet-de-chambre, was the only one who slept in his chamber, or approached to awake him in the morning. Before he went to bed, he searched every corner and dark place in his apartment. One night he saw two bottles of wine under the servant's bed, which he had purloined for his own use. The Cardinal, suspecting it might be poison intended for himself, obliged the man immediately, and before

his face, to swallow the contents of both the bottles.

CATO.

Pliny, in his preface to his Natural History, has bestowed a panegyric on the integrity of Cato, the just application of which would confer honour on the character of any magistrate in any country. "O te felicem, Marce Porci, a quo rem improbam petere nemo audet!" How great was thy happiness, Cato, that no one dared to insult thee with an unseemly request!

AN ACT OF A BYZANTINE COUNCIL.

Among the Greek MSS. contained in the King's library at Paris, there are decrees to be found uttered by the Council of Constantinople, which permit the Emperor to dispense with the Ten Commandments. The MSS. have no mark of being apocryphal; but the Council could not boast of their inflexible orthodoxy.

PRAISE.

The most beautiful passage in Voiture is that in a letter, in which, speaking in

commendation of Cardinal Richelieu, he says, "that praise is more affecting which proceeds from the mouth of the common people, than that which flows from the pens of the poets." Women are more susceptible than men of these popular commendations. Queen Elizabeth of England gave an audience to some deputies from the States General of Holland. A young man belonging to the suite, on seeing the Queen, expressed in very licentious terms his admiration of her personal charms. The Queen, perceiving during the audience that the young man had uttered some speech which displeased the ladies who were near him, enquired what he had said. On being told, so far from being angry at the indecorum of his language, she was pleased with the animated terms of his praise. Reginam vicit Mulier: "The Woman prevailed over the Queen."

A MS. SONNET OF LOPEZ DE VEGA.

The following singular production is taken from some MS. poetry which M. C*** met with at Rome. The imitation by

Voiture is added, that the reader may amuse himself with a comparison of the French translation with the original Spanish.

SONETO.

Un soneto me manda hazer Violante;
Que en mi vida me he visto en tanto aprieto.
Catorze versos dizen que es soneto.
Burla burlando van los tres delante.

Yo pensè que no hallara consonante,
Y estoi a la mitad de otro quarteto.
Mas si me veo en el primer terceto,
No ay cosa en los quartetos que me espante.

Por el primer terceto voy entrando:
Y aun parece que entrè con pie derecho.
Pues fin con este verso le voy dando.

Ya estoi en el segundo, y aun sospecho
Que voy los treze versos acabando.
Contad si son catorze, y esta hecho.

RONDEAU PAR VOITURE.

Ma foi, c'est fait de moi, car Isabeau
M'a conjuré de lui faire un rondeau.

Cela me met en une peine extrème.
Quoi ! treize vers, huit en eau, cinq en eme?
Je lui ferois aussi-tôt un bateau.

En voila cinq pourtant en un monceau.
Faisons-en huit, en invoquant Brodeau.
Et puis mettons, par quelque stratagème.
Ma foi, c'est fait.

Si je pouvois encor de mon cerveau
Tirer cinq vers, l'ouvrage seroit beau.
Mais cependant, je suis dedans l'onzième,
Et si je crois que je fais le douzième.
En voila treize ajustez au niveau.
Ma foi, c'est fait.

IMITATED FROM THE SPANISH OF LOPEZ DE VEGA*.

Capricious Wray a sonnet needs must have;
I ne'er was so put to't before—a sonnet!
Why, fourteen verses must be spent upon it:
'Tis good, howe'er, t'have conquer'd the first stave.

* See Dodsley's Poems, Vol. II.

Yet I shall ne'er find rhymes enough by half,
Said I, and found myself i' th' midst o' the second.
If twice four verses were but fairly reckon'd,
I should turn back on th' hardest part, and laugh.

Thus far with good success I think I've scribbled,
And of the twice seven lines have clean got o'er ten.
Courage! another 'll finish the first triplet.
Thanks to thee, Muse, my work begins to shorten.
See! thirteen lines got thro' driblet by driblet.
'Tis done! count how you will, I warr'nt there's fourteen.

BOURDELOUE.

Father H*** told me one day, that when Bourdeloue preached at Rouen, every artisan shut up his shop, the merchants quitted the exchange, the lawyers their courts, and the physicians their patients, and gathered round this celebrated preacher. "When I preached there," says Father

H***, "the year following, I restored every thing to its proper order. Neither the merchant quitted his business, nor the lawyer his court," &c.

M. Santeul, coming into company after having attended a very dull discourse, delivered by the Abbé C***, observed to his friends, that the Abbé had done better the year before.—"He did not preach then," replied one of the persons present. "That is the very thing I mean," replied M. Santeul.

VERSES WRITTEN ON A MIRROR.

A man of gallantry, being one day at the toilet of his mistress, took up a pocket looking-glass which he found there, and wrote the following verses on the back of it.

Iris, en ce miroir toujours
Vous pourrez voir l'objet que j'aime.
Je voudrois bien toujours de même
Y voir l'objet de vos amours.

This glass, dear Chloe, to your eyes
Always reflects the nymph I prize.
Happy were I, did it discover,
Whilst thus I gaze, your fav'rite lover.

ARISTOTLE.

In the Lexicon of Suidas is the following sublime passage, which describes the genius and talent of that great father of ancient philosophy. The fine turn of the expression carries with it evident proof of its originating from some Greek writer of the purest ages. "Aristotle was the secretary of Nature: he dipped his pen in intellect."

VERSES TO BE WRITTEN OVER A PICTURE OF BOILEAU.

Tel fut notre grand satirique!
Quiconque à la rime s'applique
Doit avoir un portrait si beau:
Et pour mieux se tenir en garde
Ecrire au-dessus du tableau:
Rimeur, Despréaux te regarde!

IMITATED.

Thus look'd our satirist sublime!
Purchase this piece, ye men of rhyme.

To check your vanity and pride,
Let this dread distich be apply'd:
" Scribbler, whoe'er thou art, beware,
And Boileau's fix'd keen eye revere!"

THE CHRISTIAN ÆRA.

The most ancient author, whom we find using the modern mode of date, Anno Domini, is the Venerable Bede*, the English historian. It was adopted in France under King Pepin, and fully established in the reign of Charlemagne. The custom of beginning the year on the first of January commenced in France in 1564.

EPIGRAM.

A pretty girl at a masquerade dressed herself in the habit of a Jesuit; which whimsical circumstance gave occasion to the following epigram:†

* Bede published his Ecclesiastical History in 731.

† A singular coincidence of sentiment (if it be not an imitation), the reader will perceive between this French epigram and the Latin one of Dr. Johnson, addressed to a Lady who professed herself of Whig principles, in answer to her high-flown speeches on liberty:

On s'étonne ici que Caliste,
Ait pris l'habit de Moliniste.
Puisque cette jeune beauté
Ote à chacun sa liberté,
N'est-ce pas une Janseniste? *

What means Calista's mimic wit?
Calista is no Jesuit.
Where'er the damsel rolls her eye,
We all give up our liberty:
Able no longer to resist,
We hail the lovely Jansenist!

A GALLANT PASSPORT.

Lambert †, an excellent musician, was very much pressed by a lady of un-

"Liber ut esse velim, suasisti pulchra Maria,
Ut maneam liber pulchra Maria vale."

Adieu, Maria, since you'd have me free:
For who beholds thy charms a slave must be.

Boswell's Life of Johnson, vol. iii. p. 131, note.

* See the disputes about liberty, &c. between the Jesuits and Jansenists, in Mosheim's Ecclesiastical History, 17th cent.

† Michael Lambert was a celebrated French musician in 1610. He was considered as the great master of vocal music,

common beauty, to teach her to sing. Lambert for a long time resisted her importunities, till being very strongly and repeatedly importuned, he declared that his apprehensions of falling in love with the lady, were the only cause of his denial. Counsellor L. who was present at the confession, drew up immediately in the lady's name, a free passport for Lambert to the lady's presence. "We the divine and resistless Miss ——, grant permission to Mr. Lambert, at all times to enter our mansion in perfect safety; and do prohibit our charms, graces, and attractions, to make any attack whatever on the freedom of the aforesaid Mr. Lambert, &c."

BON MOT.

A Canon of —— being very ill, the Bishop of his diocese had disposed of his prebend. On his recovery from his illness

and used to accompany his favourite instrument the lute with his voice. Lambert had the place of music master to the King; was a favourite of Cardinal Richelieu, and father-in-law to the famous Lully. He died at Paris 1696.

L'Avocat's Dict.

he absented himself more than the usual period of his visiting his diocesan. On being asked by some of his friends the reasons of his conduct, he replied with great gravity, "that he was afraid that the Bishop might be angry with him for not dying the year before."

ANECDOTES OF A COURTIER.

The Duke d'Usez was considered a very good courtier, though a man of weak intellect. He was Gentleman Usher to the Queen. One day the Queen asked the Duke what time of day it was? "What time your Majesty pleases." At another time the Queen asked him when he expected his wife the Duchess to be brought to bed: "Whenever your Majesty pleases."

PETITION IN VERSE.

Father S—— was happy in his turn for French rhymes; and I am sorry that the following verses of his to the King, asking him for a vacant benefice, did not succeed, as the living was already given away.

Nous avons, grand heros, deux desseins
differens,
Vous de vaincre vingt Rois et moi vingt
concurrens.
Mais l'un de ces desseins est mieux conduit
que l'autre;
Que cependant tout iroit bien!
Si vous me repondiez du mien,
Comme je vous reponds du vôtre.

IMITATED TO LOUIS XIV.

Most valiant Sir, from rival kings to snatch
The sword of empire is your vast ambition;
From rival monks this benefice to catch,
Is mine, as signified by this petition.
Tho' different our aims, yet ne'er the less,
One point to each a common wish secures;
Pledge but yourself, great Sir, for my success,
With the same zeal that I would pledge
for yours.

The above verses remind me of others addressed by an eminent counsellor to a very pretty woman his client.

Si je ne gagne mon procès,
Vous ne gagnerez pas le vôtre:
Vous n'aurez pas un bon succès,
Si je ne gagne mon procès.
Vous avez chez moi libre accès,
J'en demande chez vous un autre.
Si je ne gagne mon procès,
Vous ne gagnerez pas le vôtre.

IMITATED.

If what I ask I cannot gain,
You also, Ma'am, must plead in vain.
If I must lose the cause I plead,
Vain are your wishes to succeed;
Since you can see me when you chuse,
My visits you should not refuse:
If what I claim you still deny,
You can no more succeed than I.

EPIGRAM.

Upon the question, "Why women have not beards?" I have seen several copies of verses written, not philosophically, but giving humorous solutions. I insert the following Latin one, as a good specimen:

Quam benè prospiciens generi natura loquaci,
Cavit ut imberbis fœmina quæque foret:
Nimirum linguam compescere nescia, radi
Illæsis posset fœmina nulla genis.

IMITATED.

Nature regardful of the babbling race,
Planted no beard upon a woman's face;
Not Packwood's razors, tho' the very best,
Could shave a chin that never is at rest.

THE GRATEFUL WIDOW.

A pious lady had sent up her petition, and made her offerings to St. Rabboni, supplicating the conversion of her husband. A few days afterwards the good man made his exit. The pious widow exclaimed in a fervent tone, "What an excellent and gracious saint is Rabboni, he even gives us more than we pray for."

A GOOD PRESCRIPTION.

I dined one day in company with Patin*,

* When Patin drolled out the words oportet vivere S. I. C. in Latin, *thus*; Menage thinking of the bumper in Patin's

who was the merriest physician of his time On taking up a bumper, he addressed me, "Domine Menagi oportet vivere S. I. C." I answered, "I am sure that saying is not taken from Hippocrates; for if all persons should follow that example literally, your doctors would have a great many more patients than you have."—"You do not understand," replied Patin, "what I mean by the letters S. I. C. (thus) I mean that every one should live sobrie (soberly), jucundè (pleasantly), castè (chastely).

BON MOT.

A young man came in very great haste to pay his compliments to a very accomplished and beautiful woman, for whom he entertained the highest respect. The lady exclaimed, "My dear Prince, what a hurry you are in."—"Indeed I must be, Madam," replied the Prince, "for I am following my inclination."

hand, thought that the prescription: perhaps he blundered, not knowing that Patin was a temperate man, and was then sporting with the etymological genius of Menage, by the turn given his interpretation of the Latin monosyllable.

A SONG.

The following gallant verses were written in answer to an unpolite copy, which a lady, not remarkable for her beauty, received on her marriage; and in which the poet had hinted that her husband need not apprehend being a cuckold.

L'impertinent vaudeville,
Que l'on a fait contre vous!
Peut-on sans être en courroux,
L'oüir chanter par la ville!
On a cru vous outrager,
Mais la vengeance est facile,
On a cru vous outrager,
Mais je vous saurai venger.
Pour corriger le langage,
Du poëte médisant,
Qui dit qu' en vous épousant,
On échappe au cocuage:
Vous n'avez qu' à consentir,
Je n'en dis pas davantage,
Vous n'avez qu' à consentir,
Et je le ferai mentir.

IMITATED.

The town of this strange song is full,
No doubt the poet will be hooted;
A song so scandalous and dull,
Besides so easily refuted.

Headlong he rush'd in angry spite,
To vex and teize you all his end;
I'll quickly teach him how to write
Of things he cannot comprehend.

I'll sink the dog in foul disgrace,
With your consent or your desire;
At any time, or any place,
I'll prove the fellow is a liar.

EPIGRAM.

I made the following verses on an *old* man, who foolishly endeavoured to conceal his age:

Quel âge avez vous? dites-moi.
Quarante ans—bon—pas davantage?
Conservez vous: de bonne foi,
Vous pourriez bien mourir en la fleur de vôtre âge.

IMITATED.

How old are you, my gentle youth?
Come tell me now in sober truth.
Forty—no more! are you aware,
That now you need some little care;
Lest in the zenith of your strength,
Death quickly lay you at full length.

CRITICISM ON CORNEILLE.

Racine, in his comedy of the Plaintiffs, speaking of a lawyer, act I. scene 1. says, "Ses rides sur son front gravoient tous ses exploits." The wrinkles in his forehead engraved his exploits. This line Racine had borrowed from the *Cid*, act I. scene 1. Corneille on seeing this was very indignant, and exclaimed, "What shall a young man ridicule my best verses!" However, the academicians in their critique on the *Cid*, properly observed on this line, that wrinkles work years, but do not engrave exploits. But poets are very jealous of their works.

RETORT COURTEOUS.

A lady of great beauty and accomplish-

ments said to the Siamese Ambassador, that she wondered at, and blamed his countrymen, because they had so many wives. "Madam," replied the Ambassador, if we could find one woman possessed of as much beauty, graces, and talents as your ladyship possesses, we should be very well satisfied to adopt the customs of your country in this respect.

GARRULITY.

I know not a greater pest in society than a babbling person, whose tongue is never at rest. I remember an epigram that I made on the son of an apothecary, that talked without end.

Filius Albini Philodemus Pharmacopolæ,
Instar mortari tinnit sine fine paterni.

IMITATED.

Young clyster's tongue in noise abounding,
Like his paternal mortar rings,
In mixing heterogeneous things,
His pestle-tongue is ever sounding.

BON MOT.

The Bishop of —— was deputed from the provinces of ——, to inform the Queen Regent that they were very incapable of paying the imposts required of them. "Your Majesty will consider," added his Lordship, "that these provinces are rich only in orange trees and jessamines; and that you should consider them in the place of beggars who wear perfumes."

BON MOT.

When the persons deputed for that purpose were examining the illegal projections of the shops, houses, &c. in several streets of Paris, in order to retrench their bulkiness, the Abbè ——, who was very prominent, both behind and before, observed merrily, "that he must hasten home, or these folks would report him as a nuisance in the streets."

IRRESOLUTE PERSONS.

There are certain sorts of people who pass their whole age in consultations, and

never put in practice what they are always so busily employed in meditating upon. To such idle persons I apply the words in Eccles. ch. xi. vers. 4. "Qui observat ventos non seminat, &c." He that observeth the wind shall not sow, and he that regardeth the clouds shall not reap.

BON MOT OF A GAMBLER.

An Italian, who was very much addicted to gaming, very poor and very unlucky, used to exclaim in these unfortunate occasions, "O fortuna traditrice! tu mi poi ben far perdere; ma pager nò." Fortune, thou vile traitress, it is true you can make me lose but you cannot make me pay.

MATTHEW PARIS*

Was an English monk and an excellent historian, with the exception of his visions,

* Matthew Paris was a benedictine monk in the Monastry of St. Albans, he was the literary ornament of the thirteenth century. He was skilled in the mathematics, painting, and architecture. His learning was exceeded only by his probity. The discipline and correction of many of the convents in his

apparitions, &c. with which he abounds. This is his blind side, and perhaps that too of the age in which he lived. In other points Matthew Paris is a fair and candid relator, giving us a sufficient insight into characters, without fatiguing us with a variety of them too minutely described and too frequently introduced, so as to weary the reader.

BON MOT.

M. O——, on reading Pliny the younger's account of his Villas*, observed, that it was written with such accuracy of detail, as if Pliny had intended to put them up for sale.

time was committed to his administration. His great work is an History of England, from the Creation of the World to 1273; the part of this history most esteemed by scholars is that which begins with William the Conqueror, &c. The best edition of this work is 2 vols. folio, 1640, London.

* These descriptions are contained in chap. xvii. book 2. and chap. vi. book 5. Felibien, in his 6 vol. 12mo. of his works of the Ancient Architects, &c. has given an excellent translation, with ground plans of the Villas and maps of the gardens, from the above chapters.

THE PIOUS PENITENT.

Une femme se confessa;
Le confesseur à la sourdine
Derriere l'autel la troussa
Pour lui donner la discipline.
L'epoux non loin de là caché
De misericorde touché,
Offrit pour elle dos et fesse.
La femme y consentit d'abord;
Je sens dit-elle ma foiblesse,
Mon mari sans doute est plus fort,
Sus donc, mon pere touchez fort
Car je suis grande pecheresse!

IMITATED.

The lady finish'd her confessions;
The priest, brim-full of wrath and zeal,
Resolv'd to punish her transgressions
To make the lady's body feel.
Behind the altar dragg'd he then
The lady and prepar'd to strip her;
The husband, tenderest of men,
Could not endure the priest should whip her.
Strait from his hiding-place he sped,
And plac'd himself quick in her stead.

Th' obedient wife soon gave him place,
And, with a very piteous face,
When, on her husband's back, each stroke
Proclaim'd the whipper not in joke,
Exclaim'd, " Sir Priest, spare not your
labour,
Let your hard blows wipe out my sin,
My husband, you, and ev'ry neighbour
Know what a sinner I have been.

BON MOT, MATTER AND SPIRIT.

Madam B——, Canoness of R———, attended a sermon, wherein the preacher had harangued with a great deal of spirit, but had arranged the matter of his discourse very unskilfully and confusedly. A friend of the preacher asked the lady how she liked the sermon, and whether it was written and spoken with great energy and vivacity. " I think," replied the fair critic, " that the spirit of the discourse was too powerful for the dullness of the matter."

BON MOT.

My friend M. Benserade* had a witty

* Benserade (Isaac) was a poet himself, lyric and dramatic, and published 2 vols. 12mo, 1678. His conversation was re-

and very singular method of expressing himself on every occasion. We were one day conversing on poetry, and he, commending his favourite bard Adam Menùsier, observed, that "No person since his time appeared capable of imitating him."—— "Sir," says Benserade, "the fellow climbed Mount Parnassus with a ladder, and when he had ascended he drew it up after him."

A CHARACTER AND EPIGRAM.

Il est civil, accostable,
Doux, benin, courtois, affable,
Et le bon prelat en somme
Merite d'être honnête homme.

IMITATED.

Aurelio's easy of access,
Mild in his temper, and a man
That's ever ready to profess
To do us all the good he can;
With qualities so much in vogue
I wish he was not such a rogue.

commended to his numerous acquaintance by the innocent spostiveness of his sayings and observations.

L'AVOCAT's Dict.

A SATIRICAL DEVICE.

In the reign of Philip II. of France, a nobleman had spoken very freely of that monarch's intimacy with his wife. The unfortunate cuckold was put into prison for his rebellious murmurings. The following device was published by the wags of the time, as a representation of the unhappy man's fate.—A snail was pourtrayed in the act of retiring into his shell, and this motto was affixed to the print; "Carcere cornua frænat." Into a prison he withdraws his horns.

A PUN.

A priest in Languedoc had nursed before the entrance of his church two rows of black mulberries, and had obtained from them a pretty annual sum by selling the leaves, &c. With this money collected he soon after repaired the portal of the church, and over it he inscribed "Mori Lucrum*."

* To the English reader it is necessary to explain that the words in the Latin signify both the gain from the mulberry, or it is gain to die a christian; an axiom appropriate to the place.

EPIGRAM AND ÆNIGMA.

Pontanus having in one line described a hole ænigmatically thus:

" Dic mihi quid majus fiat quo pluria demas*."

Scriverius answered immediately and extempore;

" Pontano demas carmina, major erit†."

ON BELL RINGING‡.

Persecuteurs du genre humain,
Qui sonnez sans misericorde,
Que n'avez-vous au cou la corde
Que vous tenez en votre main?

* Tell me what becomes larger the more you take away from it?

† Pontanus would be a greater man if you deduct or take away his poetry.

An account of Pontanus (Isaac) and Scriverius his rival wit and poet, may be seen in Baillet's " Jugemens des Savans."

‡ This epigram was made by Menage on a loud tolling for the funeral of a rich man; and he entertained the same idea of this tribute to departed greatness which his satirical countryman Boileau conceived.

" Pour honorer les morts font mourir les vivans."

" To honour the dead they kill the living."

IMITATED.

Ye tyrants of the human ear,
Ah why a wretched poet vex?
I wish the ropes your hands now bear
Were tightly twisted round your necks.

BON MOT.

The Abbé de la Victoire used to say of M. G——, who was a notorious parasite and infamous calumniator, "That fellow never opens his mouth but at another man's expence."

BON MOT.

I held the beautiful hand of Madam G— for a long time within my two, and on letting it go the Abbé P—— observed that it was, by far, the finest work that ever went out of my hands.

BON MOT.

A rector of a parish in L—— being asked, somewhat curiously, what was the name of the saint that his church was dedicated to, replied, that "He did not

know, as he was only acquainted with the saint by sight."

A FALSE THOUGHT.

Apuleius, in his "Golden Ass," gives this unphilosophical account of a fine apartment, which was ornamented with precious stones: "Domus hæc suum diem sibi ipsi facit." This chamber supplies itself with its own light.

ON LENDING BOOKS.

M. T—— used to say that the reason why people kept back the books which were lent to them was, that it was easier to retain the authors than their contents. I sent the following lines to a friend, who had a long while omitted to send back a Pausanias, which I had lent to him:

"Ter bissena suum jam luna redintegrat orbem,
Ex quo Pausanias nunc repetendus abest.
Tarda redire quidem mea, Paule, volumina possunt
At quarto saltem mense redire decet.

Felicem te meque simul si mittere libros
Hac reliquos possem conditione, tibi."

IMITATED.

Thirty-six moons have come and fled,
Since my Pausanias, luckless elf,
Was, Paulus, on your table spread,
Or put aside upon your shelf;
I did not think to see again
His visage e'er the fourth moon's wane.
Within this time, would you agree,
Paulus, my authors to restore,
'Twould be as well for you as me,
For then I would not grudge you more.

BON MOT.

I was in company with the Countess de la Suze, and we talked of Madam Chatillon, who was very handsome; I said, "That lady was a Grace and that the Countess was a Muse." She bowed to the compliment on her learning, but added, "I have some pretensions also to charms."—"Madam," I replied, "Erato, one of the Muses, derived her name from her beauty."

ANECDOTE OF JULIUS CÆSAR*.

On his landing in Africa, Julius Cæsar, in stepping out of his boat, fell down on the ground upon his face. This circumstance, which another person might have considered as unfavourable, the dexterity of Cæsar's genius construed favourably, and he exclaimed joyfully, "Te teneo Africa." Thus I embrace you Africa.

ANECDOTE OF A PAINTER.

M. D——, though eminent in his profession as a limner, found his pictures would sometimes remain too long on his hands. A rich man, whose face was very black, had delayed to send for his portrait till M. D—— found the delay inconvenient, and addressed the original one day somewhat hastily, "Sir, if you do not send for your portrait speedily I must let mine host of

* Suetonius's Life of Cæsar, chap. lx. who says of Cæsar, "Ne religione quidem ulla a quoquam incepto absterritus unquam vel retardatus est." Cæsar was never deterred or delayed from any enterprize by a reverence for any religious opinion.

the black man have it, as he is going to put up a fresh sign."

AN EPIGRAM.

A gentleman who had been jilted by his mistress wrote in indignation the following lines to revenge himself:

" *Lise* a beau faire mignarde,
Chaque jour elle s'enlaidit,
Ce n'est pas que je la regarde,
Mais tout le monde me le dit."

IMITATED.

Lisa no more coquets——she's wise,
Each day less brilliant are her eyes,
Her forms scarce seem the same;
So long a stranger to her face,
I cannot say I know the case,
I trust to gen'ral fame.

A REPARTEE.

The Marquis del Carpio, a Spanish nobleman, on entering a church in Naples, presented the holy water to a lady, who, on receiving it from him, shewed a very

thin and ill-made hand, with a ring on it; the Marquis said in Spanish, " Quisiera mas la sortija que la mano." I like the ring better than the hand. The lady who understood Spanish, replied, (putting her hand to the ribband of his order, which hung round his neck) " E yo el cabestro que el asno." And I like the collar better than the beast.

ANECDOTE OF HENRY IV. OF FRANCE.

One day Henry paid a private visit to the fair Gabrielle when the Duke de Belle Guarde was with her, and who retired, on the King's entrance, under the lady's bed. In the mean time a cold collation was served up in the bed-chamber. Henry, who saw the Duke retreating under the bed, cut off the leg of a chicken and threw it under the valence, saying, with great good-humour, " Every one must live*."

BLUNDER IN HORACE.

I wished to have written a copy of verses

* This tale is taken from Moisant de Brieux, his Treatise on some Ancient Customs and Forms of Speech, page 120, printed at Caen in 1672, in 12mo.

Editor of Menagiana.

on a friend's marrying his maid, in imitation of Horace, who had written an ode on the same occasion, but I found Horace would not suit my purpose. The Roman poet praises his friend, because he has imitated the antients, who married their maid-servants; and instances the case of Achilles being in love with Briseis, who by the bye was not a servant but a captive princess, and belonged to Achilles by the rights of war, &c.*

LAWS RESPECTING THE COMIC WRITERS OF ANTIQUITY.

In comedies represented on the Athenian stage, persons satirized therein were announced to the audience by name. So-

* Menage uttered this observation, without a full recollection of the ode (IV, book II.) or he would have remembered that Horace, aware that his examples were of females of rank and not of plebeians, persuades his friend not to be ashamed of his attachment to his maid, for that no doubt she was of princely extraction.

Nescias an te generum beati,
Phyllidis flavæ decorent parentes,
Regium certe genus, &c.

DACIER's Horace. See notes.

crates was often present when he was one of the dramatis personæ. The laws forbad this liberty. The comedians then used masks, which accurately represented the faces of the persons intended to be ridiculed. Another time the laws interfered, and this scandalous practice was repressed. In consequence of these restrictions, comedy became modest and decorous, such as were the comedies of Menander*.

DEDICATIONS.

It is a bon mot, uttered by the learned Furetiere†, that the first inventor of dedications must certainly have been a beggar.

* The reader is referred for further information on this curious subject, to a treatise on the Athenian laws, by the learned Samuel Petit, p. 79, &c. "Leges Atticæ," in folio, Paris 1635.

Editor of Menagiana (Note).

† M. Antony Furetiere, eminent for his variety of learning, died in 1688. His Universal Dictionary of the French language, in 4 vols. folio, was printed at Amsterdam 1725. Furetiere's notion of dedications, often so disgraceful both to the writers and patrons, is facetiously repeated by Dr. Young.

All other trades demand—verse-makers beg;
A dedication is a wooden leg, &c.

Universal Passion, Sat. 4, lin. 191.

THE GLUTTON.

The following verses were made on an egregious glutton, who complained that the conversation of the company spoiled his dinner.

Gomor etant à table avec certains pedants,
Qui crioient et prêchoient trop haut sur la vendange;
Lui qui ne songe alors qu' à ce que font ses dens,
Paix là paix là dit-il on ne sait ce qu'on mange.

IMITATED.

Gomor, a hog of Epicurus stye,
At dinner view'd each dish with curious eye;
The pedant guests around him clamour'd loud,
Of endless talk, and ceaseless bawling proud:
"Cease, cease," cried Gomor; "your confounding prate,
I scarce can taste the viands on my plate."

SPARTAN MALEDICTIONS.

We find in the lexicon of Suidas, that a

Lacedæmonian execrated those whom he hated, by these three wishes: that they might build houses, buy fine clothes, and marry coquets.

AUTHORS.

It has been said justly of these unhappy persons, that they had the whole world to contend with; and were destitute of any one that would plead in their favour.

ATTORNEY GENERAL.

A person somewhat ludicrously described the burthen which this office imposed on the shoulders of the magistrate. "No sooner," says the wag, "have you fired your piece, than you must charge it again."

AN ELEGANT COMPLIMENT.

M. Charpentier one day called upon me, but as I was in my study, the servant had told him that I was engaged, as I had desired him to tell strangers. On hearing that it was M. Charpentier, I ran out after him, and brought him back to my

house: "My dear Sir, a man of letters can never interrupt a man of letters."

EPIGRAM.

Un jeune Abbé me crut un sot,
Pour n'avoir pas dit un mot;
Ce fut une injustice extrême,
Dont tout autre auroit appelé:
Je le crus un grand sot lui-même,
Mais ce fut quand il eut parlé.

IMITATED.

A youthful Abbé full of prate,
Pronounc'd me dull and quite absurd;
Because that in some strange debate,
I utter'd not a single word.

I judg'd the Abbé too was weak,
By the reverse of his own rule;
'Twas only when I heard him speak,
That I was sure he was a fool.

ON ANAGRAMS, EPIGRAMS, AND THEIR AUTHORS.

M. Adrien de Valois satirized these trifles and triflers in the following epigram:

Quicunque nervis ingeni parum fisus,
Doctumque carmen facere posse desperans,
Evisceratis verba quærit in verbis,
Anagramma versu claudat ut salebroso,
Laboriosis occupatus in nugis,
Non hic meretur usquequaque damnari;
Nam se ipse noscit, et vetus probat verbum
Citharœdus esse qui nequit sit Aulœdus,
Anagrammatista qui poeta non sperat.

IMITATED.

We should not blame the humble bard,
(Who finding it a task too hard),
"To build the lofty rhime;"
Old letters, with such care transposes,
Into new words the same composes,
And makes them quaintly chime.

This modest poet knows his force
And weakness; and desires of course,
This adage grave to follow;
Should not the harp your genius suit,
You yet may play upon the flute,
And write without Apollo.

My friend Colletet sent me the following

French verses, to ridicule the writers of anagrams.

J'aime mieux sans comparaison,
Menage, tirer à la rame;
Que d' aller chercher la raison,
Dans les replis d'une anagramme.
Cet exercice monacal,
Ne trouve son point vertical,
Que dans une tête blessée;
Et sur Parnasse nous tenons,
Que tous ces renverseurs de noms,
Ont la cervelle renversée.

IMITATED.

Menage, I'd rather tug the oar,
Than any sense or wit explore,
Which mazy anagrams may hide,
In folds so strangely multiplied.
This monkish wit could never gain,
Th' ascendant in a sober brain;
And 'tis averr'd by critics sound,
That all these letter-*breaking* elves,
Who thus good peaceful words confound,
Must surely first be *crack'd* themselves.

AMBITION.

It is not in the minds of the indigent, where ambition chuses for its residence; but in the bosoms of the rich, and of those who are at their ease. Though ambition be a vice, yet it is often the occasion of virtues. Those who aspire to high situations in the law, for instance, must not only be possessed of capacities to discharge their offices, but they are seriously called upon to cultivate the virtues of justice, equity, politeness, affability, &c. if they wish for the approbation of the world around them.

VERSES SENT TO A LADY WITH A VIOLET.

Modeste en ma couleur, modeste en mon sejour,
Franche d' ambition je me cache sous l'herbe;
Mais si sur votre front je puis me voir un jour,
La plus humble des fleurs sera la plus superbe.

IMITATED.

Tho' retired my dwelling, and modest my mein,
Unambitious my head, from the turf I scarce rear;
When once in your ringlets, dear lady, I'm seen,
The proudest of flowers I then should appear.

BON MOT.

When Doctor —— detected his wife, who was a very beautiful woman, in adultery, he compelled her to take refuge from the taunts of the world in a convent. He supplied her place with a notorious prostitute. A wag, who heard this circumstance reported in company, readily replied, "Why the Doctor might as well have retained his wife."

THIN WOMEN.

M. D—— had a very thin wife. He was asked the reason why he had chosen a person of that figure, rather than a more

plump one: he replied, "that a thin woman presented him a nearer and easier way to her heart."*

JOKE.

A lady, who had been invited to the consecration of Cardinal de Retz, at the Sorbonne, perceiving a large circle of Bishops attending the ceremony, exclaimed, "I feel myself in Paradise."—"In Paradise, Madam," replied a gentleman next to her; "Do you think that there are so many Bishops there?"

BURYING IN CHURCHES.

In the life of M. Piétre, a physician, recorded by Guy Patin, it is mentioned that M. P—— forbid by his last will that

* Menage, who was a famous relater of stories, old and new, did not always recollect the sources from whence he drew them, and therefore his dramatis personæ were invented often by himself. The story of M. D—— is to be found in the following epigram, translated from the Greek of Rufinus.

Chlorinda's slim form with what raptures I view,
What joys in my fancy again I pursue;
Whilst thus round her waist my embraces I twine,
And find her dear heart beat so nearly to mine.

his body should be interred in a church, lest it might be injurious to the living, by its putrifaction and exhalation. Philip Piétre, his son, put this monumental inscription over his tomb, in the churchyard of St. Stephen of the Mount.

"Simo Pietreus Doctor Medicus Par: vir pius et probus hic sub dio sepeliri, voluit ne mortuus cuiquam noceret, qui vivus omnibus profuerat."

Simon Piétre, a Paris doctor in physic, and a man eminent for his piety and probity, desired to be buried in the open air, lest his death might injure any individual, as his life was employed to the benefit of all.*

A TALE.

Santeuil un jour au fond d'une chapelle,
Surplis au dos, à l'ecart se plaça:

* Those who have seen the practice of burying in churches in London, and other large cities, must applaud the humanity, and good sense of this Parisian doctor; and utter a wish that the legislature may one day interfere between a public nuisance and a private emolument.

Le voyant seul, une femme assez belle,
Qui le crut Prêtre, à lui se confessa.
Sans s' emouvoir le drole lui laissa
Deduire au long toute la Kyrielle,
Puis se levant; Madame, excusez-moi,
Prêtre, dit il, ne suis, ni prêt à l'etre.
Tu ne l'es pas, s'ecria-t-elle, traitre?
Eh pourquoi donc méchant homme, pourquoi
Ne me l'avoir pas plutôt fait connoitre.
Oh ton Prieur le saura sur ma foi,
Tu dois t'attendre à de grièves peines.
Bien, dit *Santeuil*, allez conter le cas
A mon Prieur. Moi je vais de ce pas
A votre Epoux révéler vos fredaines.

IMITATED.

Dress'd like a priest, tho' nothing less,
In a dark chapel's dark recess
Santeul sat snug, when from the quire
A lady came; who, to the friar,
Kneeling in penitence, begins
To ope her catalogue of sins:
Santeul arose with careless air,—
"I am no priest, oh lady fair."—
"No priest!" exclaim'd the lady, frighted,
"Your fraud, good sir, shall be requited,

Your prior shall know this villain's trick."—
" Ma'am," quoth the friar, " be not so quick,
Before you gain the prior's ear
I'll tell your husband when and where."

A LUDICROUS STORY.

A person riding with his friend beat his horse very severely for kicking up, &c. the horse continued his pranks. The friend called out, " My dear sir, show yourself the wiser of the two." When this story was told before a man of wit, he observed, " That the point of the tale was wrong directed, for that in fact the friend aforesaid meant his address to the horse."

VERSES WRITTEN ON SEEING A VERY FINE PICTURE OF ST. BRUNO*, AT THE CHARTREUX, BY COUNT EMANUEL TESORO.

Non fucata levi minio te ludit imago.
Nil ficti lepida hæc forma, nec artis habet,

* St. Bruno was offered by Pope Urban II. the Bishoprick of Regio in Italy, which he refused. He founded besides the Chartreux a monastery in Calabria. His death took place in 1101; his canonisation in 1514. His story appears obscure.
L'AVOCAT's Dict.

Aspicit ac spirat, sed rara modestia vultum
Supprimit, et circum lumina ferre vetat.
Rumperet ore sonos etiam, sed sancta silendi
Regula composito non sinit ore loqui.

IMITATED.

Think not the painter's art deceives your view,
Here nature draws and ev'ry line is true;
St. Bruno is alive, his modest mind
To down-cast looks and eyes deep-fix'd inclin'd;
He would address you dar'd the saint to break
Those rigid rules which bind him not to speak.

BON MOT OF CASAUBON.

The first time this celebrated scholar saw the Sorbonne (it had not then been rebuilt), they told him that in that hall, disputations had been held for four hundred years. He answered, "Well and what have they determined."

VERSES
ON SOME MODERN ITALIAN VERSES.

Vatibus hic mos est Italis ut mille smaragdos
  Ut mille intexant versibus astra suis.
Nil præter flores, aurum marmorque loquuntur
  Nil radios præter Luna-ve, Sol-ve, tuos.
Denique versiculis in Tuscis omnia bella
  Excipias ipsos si modo versiculos.

IMITATED.

In Italy's gay bards, thro' ev'ry line,
Diamonds and stars in varied beauty shine;
Marble and flowers of the brightest hue,
Sun-beams and moon-beams rush upon the view;
Whate'er is brilliant, or whatever seems,
Their verses boast; ah, how unlike their themes!

HYPOCRITES.

When the Tartuffe of Moliere* was

* Moliere, in his "Tartuffe" and his "Avare," has exhibited his best specimens of comic writing; the former shines in the grave and the latter in the gay style of his genius.

Lectures on Rhetoric and Belles Lettres, by Dr. BLAIR, vol. 3. page 372.

acted, great opposition arose against the piece, though it was remarkable for its morality and satire against all pretenders to virtue. At the same time a farce was suffered to keep its place on the theatre though it scoffed at all religion and morality. This being the cause of wonder and complaint in a large company, a man of wit said, that " He saw no inconsistency in the public conduct on this occasion; for Scaramouche only abuses virtue and religion, which few are concerned in; but the 'Tartuffe' abuses hypocrisy, a quality very universal."

EPIGRAM.

The following verses were written on an author who always consoled himself for the thin houses in which his pieces were exhibited.

Quand les piéces representées,
De *Boyer* sont peu frequentées,
Chagrin qu'il est d'y voir peu d'assistans;
Voici comme il tourne la chose;
Vendredi, la pluie en est cause,
Et le demanche le beau tems.

IMITATED.

Philemon writes with so much skill,
With such philosophy at will,
That helps him in all seasons;
What, tho' he writes to empty houses,
Yet his own cause he still espouses,
With self-excusing reasons.

The weather's fine, folks take a walk,
'Tis then the time, in merry talk,
T' enjoy the open air;
And when the clouds with rain abound,
Wise people then at home are found,
And wait till it is fair.

CHRISTIAN ÆRA, &c.

The most antient author that used A. D. was the venerable Bede, the English historian. In the reign of King Pepin the Æra was adopted in France; and under Charlemagne it became universal. In 1564, under Charles IX. the custom of beginning the year from the first of January took place. Before that æra they counted time by the solemn days of the church.

TWO OPPOSITE CHARACTERS.

Omnes laudat Hylas; carpit Callistratus omnes
Displicit hic nobis nec magis ille placet.
Qui laudat cunctos et pravos Pontice laudat
Qui cunctos carpit, carpit et ille bonos.

IMITATED.

John praises all—whilst surly Dick
Sends all his neighbours to old Nick:
I blame them both, for John must praise
Full many a rogue in these sad days;
And Dick must wrong, upon his plan,
Full many a worthy honest man.

EPIGRAM.

Dum caput Aufidio tractat chirurgus et ipsum,
Altius exquirit, quo videat cerebrum.
Ingemit Aufidius: quid me chirurge fatigas?
Cum subii rixam non habui cerebrum.

IMITATED.

The surgeon probing Harry's head,
Who from a fray had lately fled,

Found that his patient writh'd with pain;
Exclaim'd, " I'm looking for your brain,
I hope the blow has not"—" Sir, what,"
Harry replied, " egregious sot,
Had I had brains in any shape
They must have sav'd me from this scrape."

END OF MENAGIANA.

BOLÆANA.

SKETCH

OF THE

LIFE AND WRITINGS

OF

BOILEAU.

NICHOLAS BOILEAU, sur-named DESPREAUX, a celebrated French poet, was born in 1636. He lost his father and mother early in life. His friends advised him to assume the profession of the law, when he had gone through a course of philosophical studies. In compliance with this advice, Boileau soon became a proficient in legal knowledge, and was admitted advocate at the age of twenty. His mind, pure and elegant, was soon disgusted

with the quibbles and chicanery of his new profession; and he quitted it to enter into another, which promised to be more satisfactory to his feelings, and more edifying to his understanding. He for some time applied himself to theological authors; but absurd interpretations of holy mysteries, violent disputes on matters of little moment, and speculations involved in tenfold darkness, drove the sagacious Boileau from the cloisters of the Sorbonne. Left to himself, he discovered the real powers of his mind; and, employed on criticism and poetry, he created envy among the best poets of his age by his superior genius, and awed the indifferent writers by the acuteness and severity of his strictures. The sagacity of his intellect taught him to discover the follies and vices of his contemporaries, and the integrity of his own heart inclined him to reprobate them. Boileau became a writer as formidable by the harshness of his censures, as fascinating by the wit and humour of his satire. His early and profound knowledge of ancient authors exalted the literary character of

the poet beyond the malice of petty competition. "Those who flattered themselves that they should diminish the reputation of Boileau, by printing in the manner of a commentary, at the bottom of each page of his works, the many lines he has borrowed from Horace and Juvenal, were grossly deceived*. The verses of the ancients, which this poet turned into French with so much address, and which he hath happily made so homogenous, and of a piece with the rest of the work, that every thing seems to be conceived in a continued train of thought, by the very same person, confer as much honour on M. Despréaux as the verses which are purely his own. The original turn which he gives to his translations, the boldness of his expressions, so little forced and natural, that they seem to be born as it were with his thoughts, display almost as much invention as the first production of a thought entirely new†." Speaking of Boileau's great work,

* The Jesuits, who wrote the Journals of Trevoux, strongly object plagiarism to Boileau.

† Warton's Essay on Pope, vol. i.

the Art of Poetry, the same elegant, acute, and candid critic above quoted observes: "The brevity of his precepts, enlivened by proper imagery, the justness of his metaphors, the harmony of his numbers, as far as alexandrine lines will admit; the exactness of his method, the perspicacity of his remarks, and the energy of his style, all duly considered, may justify my opinion that it is the best composition of the kind extant. It is scarcely to be conceived how much is comprehended in four short cantos. He that has well digested these, cannot be said to be ignorant of any important rule of poetry. The tale of the Physician turned Architect, in the fourth canto, is told with vast pleasantry. It is to this work he owes his immortality; and which was of the highest utility to his nation, in diffusing a just way of thinking and writing, banishing every species of false wit, and introducing a general taste for the manly simplicity of the ancients, on whose writings this poet had formed his taste*." In October, 1677, Boileau was fixed upon by

* Warton's Essay on Pope, vol. i.

the King, in conjunction with Racine, to write his History; and in 1684 he was chosen a member of the French Academy. In the year 1701 he was elected pensionary of the Academy of Inscriptions and Medals; which place he filled with great honour till the year 1705, when, being deaf and infirm, he obtained leave to resign. He then quitted the court, and passed the remainder of his life tranquilly, amongst a few friends. Boileau died in March 1711, at the age of 74-5. The Bolæana are taken from the quarto edition: Paris, 1740, 2 vols.

BOLÆANA.

THE SATIRES.

WHEN the Satires of Boileau first came out, the rage and indignation occasioned by them among the higher as well as the lower classes of poets, &c. were universal and extreme. M. Fourcroi, a famous lawyer, whose disposition in general was jealous and malignant, and especially against M. Despréaux, circulated a printed paper all over Paris, couched in these terms: "Be it known to all who feel themselves injured by and inimical to some lately published Satires, that a meeting will be held on such a day, and on such an hour, at the house of Sieur Rohet, an attorney; and a court composed of malcontents will sit, to consider the ways and means of redressing the

complaints of those whose characters are aspersed by the aforesaid Satires."

The old Duke de la Feuillade, meeting Boileau one day in the Gallery of Versailles, repeated to him a sonnet of Charleval, which ended with these lines:

Ne regardez point mon visage,
Regardez seulement à ma tendre amitié*.

The Poet answered, that he saw nothing remarkably good in the sonnet; and objected to those two lines, on account of the play of words which they contained. The Duke perceiving the Princess Royal coming through the gallery, he read the sonnet hastily to her as she passed. The lady told him it was very fine. The Duke returned to Boileau; and in a sneering manner observed, that he must have a very fastidious taste, if he disapproved of verses which both the King and the Princess had praised. "I do not doubt the King's superiority in

* Fix your eyes no more on my countenance, but fix them only on the tenderness of my friendship.

taking towns, and gaining battles; nor do I doubt the talents of Madame the Princess; but in regard to a knowledge of poetry," replied Boileau, "I think I am at least their equal." The Duke ran in great haste to the King; and told him, with great marks of disgust and indignation, the arrogant speech of the Poet. "My Lord," replied the King, "I am sorry to say that I am obliged to confess that M. Boileau is perfectly in the right."

Boileau meeting, for the first time, two atheistical persons, he with great ease and vivacity exposed them to the ridicule of the company. In general men of this description bring to the support of their desperate cause some ingenious sophism, by which they keep their adversary at bay: but these wretched philosophers entangled themselves in their own arguments. "I have seduced," observed the Poet, "all the laughers to my side:" and added, on their going away, "God Almighty has two very feeble enemies in those two orators."

In the campaign of Gand, Messrs. Boileau and Racine were ordered to follow the King to the field of action, in which Louis had frequently exposed himself to great danger. The courtiers intreated his Majesty to be more careful of his person: his historian begged that the Monarch would not occasion him so soon to finish his history; adding, that the cannon-ball had come within seven paces of his Majesty. "How far were you off it?" asked the King. "A hundred," replied the Poet. "And were you not in fear?"—"Yes, Sire, I was much alarmed for your Majesty, and very much indeed for myself."

At the death of Racine, Boileau came to court, to solicit the King to appoint M. Valincourt his successor as joint-historiographer. "M. Boileau," said the King, "you and I have suffered a great loss in the late M. Racine."—"It is some consolation, Sire," replied the poet, "that he met his last moments courageously, and like a

Christian; since he was always very fearful of death"—"Oh aye!" replied the King, "I remember that you were the valiant men at the siege of Gand."

MOLIERE.

Of this writer Boileau spoke in terms of warm and uniform applause. He entitled him "The Observer." He used to say, that Nature seemed to have unveiled to Moliere her most secret treasures of knowledge in the morals and manners of mankind. He used to add, that Moliere always thought with correctness, but wrote often with negligence. This fault of style was common to him with Fontaine; who, hurried on by the ardour of composition, never looked back with the intention of revising his errors. Boileau used to lament the loss of Moliere's short comedy of the Amorous Professor; as even in his smallest works much wit and humour always shone forth. Boileau thought his very popular play, the Amphitryon, a moderate performance. He preferred the prologue of Plautus to his Amphitryon, before that of the French

comic writer. He gave the same preference to the scene between Jupiter and Alcmena, in the play of Plautus, and thought it superior to Moliere's in point of humour.

Moliere, on and off the stage, exhibited great comic powers: his mirth, his sentiments, and his whole conversation, were liberal, and becoming a gentleman. The only circumstance degrading to him was his profession of a player; the labours of which he sustained more for the sake of the advantages accruing to his associates than to himself.

A few days before his death, Boileau called on Moliere, who was afflicted with a dangerous cold, by which his lungs were so harassed that his dissolution seemed rapidly advancing. Moliere, naturally reserved, expressed himself with much affection towards Boileau at this meeting; which occasioned the latter to speak thus openly to him: "My dear Moliere, your situation

moves my pity. The continual activity of your mind and the violent exercise of your lungs on the stage, should prevent your further exertions in your profession. Cannot any of your brother actors assume your parts? Confine yourself to composition, and the public will esteem you the more, who look upon your actors as hirelings; and they themselves, who are not at present very complaisant to you, will, when you are off the stage, feel a greater respect to your person."—"Ah, Sir!" replied the sick man, "what is it you say? I cannot think of quitting a station of such high honour."

Boileau used to relate, that when he read to Moliere his Satire, which began with these lines:

Mais il n'est point de fou qui par bonnes raisons
Ne loge son voisin aux petites-maisons*.

There raves no madman, but, with grave rebukes,
Would send his brother maniac to St. Luke's.

* Satire iv. line 4.

Moliere observed, that he had once an intention of attempting this subject; but that he was deterred from it by the consideration of the great delicacy necessary in such an undertaking. "A comic poet," added he, "should confine himself to those aberrations of the mind which society considers as venial; and for which they do not shut up the delinquents, but treat them as fools and simpletons."

TERENCE.

This writer was a great favourite of Boileau. Terence (said he) touches the heart with his expressions. He aims not to excite laughter; an affectation too general in other comic writers: his language is that of nature, which he imitates very perfectly. His servants are not like those of Plautus; always planning schemes, and always successful in them. The servants of Terence correct their blunders in a natural way, by recollection and experience. It is astonishing, as he wrote after so popular and established an author as Plautus, in spite of all his extravagant and farcical pleasantries,

that Terence should yet supersede him in the opinion of the Roman people; and by methods so unlikely to succeed as writing according to reason, which attracts the approbation alone of the finer sorts of intellect: nor is it less strange, that the Roman people, so sensible in many other particulars, should so often err in their judgments of true and natural dramatic representations. The people will wish to laugh, be the conditions what they may; so that the merit of Terence is exalted, by the circumstance of his having brought the people to his own taste, instead of submitting to that of the people. Terence (added Boileau) is superior to Moliere in his faithful imitations of Nature; for the latter sometimes descends into ribaldry to please the multitude, forgetful of men of true discernment. Besides, Terence knows when to stop short; a caution Moliere too little respects.

ON POETRY.

A man of very good sense, but totally unacquainted with literature, said once,

before Boileau, that he had rather be able to make a wig than to make a poem; adding, "What is the use of poetry, and what end does it answer?"—"This very circumstance," replied Boileau, "raises my admiration of poetry; that, having nothing useful in it, nevertheless it should be the delight of all men of talents and reputation."

BALZAC.

Boileau used to relate a dispute about the style of Balzac, which he held with the Marechal de Grammont, who was a great admirer of this inflated mode of composition. "I observed," said the Satirist, "that the use of hyperbole, a favourite figure of Balzac's, was very easy of imitation. I gave an instance, in the case of a man who spoke remarkably deliberately. The words Yes and No in his mouth are prolix; and these two monosyllables become periods by his pronunciation."—"Excellent!" replied the Marechal de Grammont, "This example is the best thing you ever uttered."

LA FONTAINE.

Boileau used to say of La Fontaine, that he had a good deal of wit, but of one sort only; and that his shrewd yet simple mode of expressing himself was not original, but borrowed from Marot and Rabelais, &c. that a cautious use of his style was commendable, since Racine had employed it judiciously in some epigrams composed by him. La Fontaine (added Boileau) in many passages surpasses his masters; and in his Tales and Odes he is incomparable: and even in places where modesty condemns the sentiments, impartial criticism must allow that his diction retains inimitable delicacy.

EPIGRAMS.

Boileau used to say, that these short compositions often originated in conversation; nor hesitated to bring his own epigrams as an instance. Among these he gave the preference to the following one;

Ci-gît ma femme, ah qu'elle est bien,
Pour son repos, et pour le mien!

Here lies my wife; and, Heaven knows,
Not less for mine than her repose!

ON SCARRON AND HIS WRITINGS.

Boileau held in little esteem the poetry of Scarron; he thought that the burlesque and the low humour contained in it, were carried too far: but he highly commended his prose writings, and thought his style in this mode of composition very beautiful; particularly the prose of his Comic Romance. Scarron, added he, has great variety as well as sweetness in the arrangement of the language; and he possesses the happiest method of rescuing trifling circumstances from the contempt of his reader, by his way of relating them. Boileau wished that the Comic Romance should be continued; and had collected memoirs for that purpose, which he gave to a friend, in order to publish them; but the scheme was laid aside for reasons unknown.

THE INFANCY OF BOILEAU.

The early age of Boileau was painful and

irksome. He was at eight years old cut for the stone; and he felt all his life-time the consequences of the operation. Having lost his mother when very young, and his father being absorbed in business, the education of this eminent poet was entrusted to an old female servant, who treated him with great harshness. He had to endure likewise the hatred and jealousy of his elder brother, Giles Boileau; from whose presence he used to fly, by hiding himself, and passing his time in a turret near the top of the house: which exile he endured till his fifteenth year. Boileau used to say, that if life was again offered him on the terms of repassing his miserable early years, he should refuse to accept of it. His sublime genius overcame all these disadvantages. He was but just placed in the fourth class, when, with a mind improved, and inspired with the perusal of ancient writers, he felt an ardour of being a poet, and he attempted a comedy. "I introduced," he used to say, "three giants on the stage, preparing to combat with each other, on account of a lady with whom

they were all enamoured; when a fourth giant arrives, and separates the rivals by repeating the following lines:

Géans, arrêtez-vous;
Gardez pour l'ennemi la fureur de vos coups.

Giants, retire, and cease these rude alarms;
And launch on foes the fury of your arms."

ON THE VARIOUS EFFECTS OF COMEDY AND FARCE.

Boileau, in marking the distinction between legitimate comedies and farces (the latter of which excite laughter more than the most complete models of the former, though replete with natural characters, and recommended by the most ingenious story), used to observe, that there were two kinds of laughter: the one came upon you by surprise; the other, being rational, produced a more effectual and more heart-felt mirth. For (added he) the province of reason is to give us pleasure; and when we see characters in a play happily represented, and the action of the piece judiciously supported, we cannot withhold our ap-

plause; which if we do not display by fits of laughter, we betray by a certain air of satisfaction, which is inspired by the pleasure we inwardly experience. Buffooneries, which make us laugh, have certainly their merit; but compared with a piece abounding in natural traits of characters delicately conceived, are very inferior in the opinion of every man of true taste. Nature, depicted in her loveliest colours, with which genuine comedy boasts to invest her, is alone capable of filling the heart with sincere mirth, and inspiring the mind with delight, unmixed with reproach. This is the sole effect from comedy which men of elegance expect; and the surest foundation on which an author can build his lawful and lasting reputation.

HOMER.

This ancient bard was the favourite subject of praise and admiration to Boileau, whenever the merit of the poet became the topic of discourse. Homer is a poet (he used to say) whose steps the Graces never desert. All his writings are close imita-

tions of nature; and by a single trait he makes us acquainted with any of his characters. Ulysses arrives at the cave of Polypheme, who makes only one mouthful of two of the hero's companions. Ulysses presents him with a goblet of wine. "The draught is delicious!" exclaims the giant: "Begone, I will eat you the last of my prisoners."

What Boileau most admired in Homer, was the poet's talent of exalting little matters by the nobleness of his expressions. In this circumstance (added he) lies the genius and art of the poet. For great things support themselves by their own grandeur and solidity. He used to quote the following song of an unknown writer, as an instance of beautiful simplicity of style.

La charmante Bergère,
Ecoutant ses discours,
D'une main ménagére
Alloit filant toujours;

Et doucement atteinte
D'une si tendre plainte,
Fit tomber par trois fois
Le fuseau de ses doigts.

IMITATED.

The shepherdess, so young and fair,
To Strephon's story lent her ear;
Whilst with a taper hand she plied
The thrifty spindle at her side.
Soon by the fond repeated vow
The lass was mov'd, she knew not how;
By pity's sympathetic spell
Thrice from her hand the spindle fell.

A DIFFICULT PASSAGE IN HORACE* EXPLAINED.

"Difficile est communia dicere." The meaning of this axiom of Horace (observed Boileau) should be explained according to its most obvious sense; which is, that it is difficult to enter on subjects which every man can handle, so as they shall appear your own property, from the manner in which you are alone enabled to treat them.

* Art of Poetry, line 129.

Boileau used to say, that he found this explanation of that much controverted text in Hermogenes†; and was eager to support the justice of it by a variety of good arguments.

RACINE.

To the powers of his wit, this poet added a great fund of sarcastic and malignant pleasantries. Boileau used to repeat the underwritten epigram, composed by Racine on the following occasion. When his play of Andromache was acted for the first time, the men of rank, who attended the representation, were very free of their criticisms on the play, according to their various judgments, talents, and dispositions. The particular strictures uttered by two persons of high rank came to the ears of the poet; and were answered by the following lines, addressed to himself:

La vraisemblance est choquée en ta piece,
Si l'on en croit et d'Olonne et Créqui.

† See Hermogenes de Gravitat. Apt. Dicend. sect. 30. Ed. Sturmii, 1671.

Créqui dit que Pyrrhus aime trop sa maîtresse;
D'Olonne, qu'Andromaque aime trop son mari.

IMITATED.

Your tragedy, 'tis said, forsooth,
Wants nature, and the air of truth.
Your characters are overdone:
Ask Messieurs Crequi and d'Olonne.
Crequi affects he can discover
That Pyrrhus is too warm a lover.
D'Olonne protests that your great queen
Andromache excites his spleen;
And deems you ignorant of life,
In making her so fond a wife.

The humour of this epigram (added Boileau) consisted in two well-known traits in the characters of Crequi and d'Olonne. The former was notorious for his want of gallantry to the ladies; and the latter was married to a woman, of whose affection he had but little reason to boast. Some person one day observed to Boileau, that Racine was his equal in satire. "You should

have said," replied the Poet, "he is my superior in malice."

SOLILOQUIES.

Boileau used to defend the use of soliloquies by the following reasons. Speeches of this kind have become necessary on the stages since chorusses have been laid aside. In a soliloquy, a person is supposed not to be talking by himself, but thinking aloud. There are a thousand things that the most unreserved character would not speak of before his closest intimates; because he would too openly discover the secrets of his heart. Phocas, for instance, in Heraclius *, acts absurdly in unfolding to Crispus the meanness of his origin, and the crimes by which he obtained his crown. It is not natural that a Prince would declare himself an upstart before one of his own subjects; as he might encourage him to repeat the same plans when occasion presented itself. In the Cinna †, Augustus is not blameable for addressing the following verses to himself in a soliloquy:

* Act i. Scene 1. † Act iv. Scene 2.

Rentre en toi-même, Octave, et cesse de
te plaindre.
Quoi, tu veux qu'on t'épargne, et n'as rien
épargné?
Songe aux fleuves de sang, où ton bras
s'est baigné, &c.

Octavius, know thyself, and cease thy plaints.
What! hope for mercy, which thou never
gav'st?
Think on those streams of blood thine arm
has shed.

Now this fit of contrition would have been extravagant, had it not passed between his heart and himself.

CORNEILLE.

Boileau thought Corneille the most majestic of authors, ancient and modern, with respect to sentiment and style; but his admiration of this great poet was restricted by the due limits of rational criticism. He thought the fertility of his mind and the vivacity of his genius were sometimes ill directed, from a defect in his judgment. His genius, he observed, seemed in his

early writings tender and pathetic; instances of which are seen in his Cid, and in his Illusion Comique: but his talents seemed most inclined towards the grand and marvellous; and love, which he looked upon as a degrading passion, seems casually introduced into his plays, or as it were by surprise. He abjured at length the tender affections, lest they might enervate the general vigour and energy of his composition. In the character of Geronte*, the father of the Liar, the tragic rather than the comic muse seems to have guided his pen, when he describes the father loading the son with reproaches for his duplicity. In short, Corneille seems to have made verses rather under the influence of enthusiasm than of taste; as he frequently abridged excellent passages in subsequent revisions, and left the less excellent without the benefit of correction.

BOILEAU'S POWERS OF MIMICKRY.

Racine used to relate a very singular instance of this talent in the Satirist.

* Le Menteur, Act v. Scene iii.

Boileau (says Racine) once undertook to imitate the steps of an extraordinary dancer, whom he had seen, in the exhibition of his skill. Boileau executed all the difficult steps and attitudes of the performer with great success; though he had never been taught to dance, and never practised the art at any time before.

LOVE OF PRAISE.

Boileau was not insensible to praise, but uneasy when it did not appear incidentally given. When any one was too profuse of such incense, the poet exclaimed, "You shall not make me a coxcomb." On other occasions he used to restrain the panegyrist by saying, "I would rather people would read me than praise me." Boileau was languid in conversation; a defect which he betrayed from his early years. He improved very much on acquaintance. His method of discoursing was pleasing and affable: to use his own expressions on the subject, it had neither claws nor talons. To men of merit he was by no means niggard of his praise; but pedants, and shallow

pretenders to literature, felt the utmost severity of his wit. Candour and equity dictated his opinions on all occasions; and he has well described these parts of his character, in the following two verses in his Art of Poetry:

L'ardeur de se montrer, et non pas de médire,
Arma la vérité du vers de la satire.

Chant. ii.

IMITATED.

Alike unskill'd in partial praise or blame,
Truth arm'd with satire vindicates her name.

Though the disposition of Boileau was very satirical, yet he never withheld his approbation from any composition, in which he discovered instances of genius or talent. When a friend read to him a work of this description, the satisfaction which he felt flashed in his eyes, and thundered in his speech. Yet he seemed no longer master of opposite sensations to these, when any absurd specimen of verse or prose was brought before him. On the Abbé de

Villiers reading to him a short poem, in which the expression of "mauvais vent" occurred, he jumped suddenly from his seat, and exclaimed, "Ah, Monsieur! that phrase will make your whole poem stink."

P. CORNEILLE AND RACINE.

Boileau never pretended to prefer Racine to Corneille. He held their merits to be equal; and thought of them, as Juvenal decreed of Homer's and Virgil's poetry, "dubiam facientia carmina palmam." Polyeucte was in his opinion the chief work of Corneille. He considered the three first acts of Horace as incomparable. He found no expression equal to praise his Cinna, excepting the introductory lines, which his third satire had sharply reprehended, alledging that they were impertinent and declamatory. He spoke with rapturous delight of the imprecation uttered on her son by Cleopatra, in the last scene of Rodogune. All the strong and impressive passages of Corneille, the Satirist recited with great warmth of panegyric; but criticised the scene between Sertorius

and Pompey as irrational and unnatural *: as the old experienced general Sertorius, and the stripling Pompey, were characters too opposite to be introduced at this conjuncture. He joined the admirers of this scene, who founded their approbation on the spirit with which the dialogue is carried on. He objected in general to the Othon, as abounding too much in speeches, and too deficient in action.

Boileau was not superior to uneasinesses occasioned by the abuse published against him; but was the first person to applaud any ingenious satire levelled at him. "I look on myself," says he, "like an enchanted hero; whom the blows of his enemies either do not reach, or wound very slightly. With all their malice (he would add) they have not found out the vulnerable part of Achilles."—"Where does it lie?" said a friend. "That I shall not tell you," replied the Satirist: "you must find out that." It is probable that he alluded to

* Act iii. Scene 2.

the sameness of his writings, particularly in his prefaces; the character of which is too monotonous.

Boileau never dined with any of his most intimate friends, without being invited in particular; observing, on this caution, that a certain pride of mind was the characteristic of men of honour; but that a pride of air and manner was the mark of fools and blockheads.

TASSO.

A friend asked Boileau, a little while before his death, whether he had changed his opinion of Tasso*. "So very far from it," says the Satirist, "that I am sorry that I did not express myself more fully on this subject in my translation of Longinus. I would have begun with allowing that the Italian Poet has a sublime genius, and very eminent talents for poetry; but, speaking of the use which he has made of

* Et le clinquant du Tasse à tout l'or de Virgile.
The tinsel of Tasso, &c.
Satire ix.

them, I should have said and proved that good sense is not the predominant quality of his poem; and that, in his narrations, he prefers what is pleasing to what is necessary to be told; that his descriptions are disfigured by superfluous ornaments; that, in the delineation of the strongest passions, and amidst the saddest events which they occasion, Tasso destroys the pathos by untimely attempts at being brilliant; that his imagery is too flowery, and full of affectation; that his thoughts are frivolous, and more adapted to his Aminta than to his Jerusalem Delivered. Now (exclaimed Boileau) all these faults being granted, and the wisdom, gravity, and majesty of Virgil introduced in opposition to them, the contrast is as great between the Latin and Italian Poet, as between gold and tinsel."

A PARENT'S BLINDNESS.

Boileau's father one day was recounting the various qualities in the minds of his children; and delighted with the sweetness of temper, and simplicity of mind,

which he thought he had discovered in Despréaux, used to say of him, that he was very different from the rest of his children, for he knew that Despréaux would never speak ill of any body.

CAUTION TO RHIMERS.

Despréaux, in composing poetry, made his second verse before the first; and considered it as a very great secret in the art of rhiming, which gave energy and meaning to the verse. Boileau used to relate, that he communicated this mystery to Racine, adding, "and so I have taught Racine to rhime with difficulty."

A REQUISITE FOR A SATIRIST.

When Boileau first commenced his satirical career, he received admonitory hints from his friends, that he was about to stir up against himself an host of formidable enemies, who would continually keep their eyes upon him, and annoy him on every opportunity. "I care not for them," answered the intrepid Satirist, "I will en-

deavour to be an honest man, and I shall defy their malice."

ABSOLUTION.

When Boileau on a fast day attended the Rector of his parish, in order to go through his confessions, the Priest asked what employment he followed. "I write verses," replied the Poet. "So much the worse," said the Priest: "but what kind?"—"Satires."—"Worse and worse: but against whom?"—"Against bad poets, the vices of the age, pernicious books, romances, operas, &c."—"Very well," rejoined the Confessor, "there is no harm in that, and my objections are at an end."

GREAT QUALIFICATIONS.

Boileau was very skilful at the game of skittles, and very fond of the amusement, and could very frequently knock down the nine pins at one throw. "I have two talents of great utility," said the Satirist, one day joking, "to my king and country. I excel in skittles, and making rhymes."

POET'S IRASCIBLE.

One day when Boileau went in person to the Royal Treas y to receive his pension, as Poet Laureat, and presented his grant to the clerk of the office. The man on reading these rds in it, "I grant to Boileau this pe ion for the satisfaction which his work have given," exclaimed, "Of what kind are your works?"—"Masonry," replied the Poet, drolling. "I am an architect, Sir."

POETS AND PAINTERS.

Boileau used to say, that as tradesmen were accustomed to affix signs to their shops, painters of very little skill and reputation could make themselves of some use in their profession; but, said the bard, "Alas! moderate poets are of no use whatever."

NO BAD RULE.

"I never come late to a friend's dinner," says Boileau, "for I have observed that when is waiting for a man,

they make use of that time to load him with abuse."

BON MOT.

M. Barbin, whom Boileau employed as his bookseller, one day invited the poet to his country house, of which (though the rooms were very small) Barbin was very proud. After dinner the pompous Bibliopole shewed the Satirist his garden, which, in proportion, was as small as the house. "Holla," cried the Bard aloud to his coachman, "put to the horses."—"Do not be in a hurry," exclaimed the host, "what are you going about my good Sir, in such haste?"—"I am going," said the Satirist, "to get a little air at Paris."

AN EPIGRAM.

One day Boileau was in company with some ladies, when the conversation turned on the late conquest of * Mons, by Louis

* Mons, a city in Hainault, so called from its situation on a hill. It was taken by Louis XIV. and the Dauphin in person, 1691. King William raised fifty thousand men to protect it in vain.

CRUTWELL'S Gazetteer.

XIV. The poet at his departure was vehemently pressed by one of the ladies, to make two distichs on the taking of Mons. Boileau complied with her request by the following verses:

Mons étoit, disoit-on, pucelle
Q'un Roi gardoit avec le dernier soin;
Louis le Grand en eut besoin;
Mons se rendit: vous auriez fait comme elle.

IMITATED.

Mons, like a lovely favourite maid,
Safe under royal eyes protected;
Till Louis of immortal fame,
The taking of the town projected:
And soon the citadel obeyed;
You, Madam, would have done the same.

HINTS TO AUTHORS.

The man of great genius is the first person to discover his own faults, and the last to pardon them. "Of all the criticisms," observed Boileau one day, "which hurt me the most, are those which my own judgment makes on my own works.

TO THE SAME TUNE.

When Boileau launched any work into the world, he heard the attacks of the critics, however severe, with great attention and patience; observing shrewdly, "Well, those are the worst works, of which nobody speaks at all."

BOILEAU'S FUNERAL.

The number of the friends of Boileau, who attended at his funeral, was very considerable. An old woman of the lower class, perceiving the multitude which filled the street, observed shrewdly, "The man had a great many friends forsooth, yet they say that he spoke ill of every body."

ANECDOTE OF CHARLES XII. OF SWEDEN.

When this bold King of Sweden was perusing the first epistle of Boileau, he met with the passage in which Alexander the Great of Macedon was treated by the poet as a madman; the high-mettled monarch

fell into a rage, and tore the book in pieces.*

AN EPIGRAM.

The oration which Boileau delivered upon his being chosen into the Royal Academy at Paris, did the author no credit, and produced the following sarcastic verses on the poet:

Boileau nous dit dans son ecrit
Qu'il n'est pas né pour l'eloquence
Il ne dit pas ce qu'il en pense:
Mais je pense ce qu'il en dit.

IMITATED.

When Boileau modestly confesses
In eloquence he does not shine,
Not his own judgment he expresses,
But very fairly tells you mine.

* The poet in an ironical praise given by Pyrrhus's confident, aims a stroke at the ambition and folly of Alexander. Our countryman Pope, a great admirer and imitator of Boileau, has spoken out more loudly,

"From Macedonia's madman to the Swede."

HIS EPITAPH.

Ce critique fameux qu'on appelloit Boileau,
Pour le droit qu'il avoit de boire en l'Hypocrene,
Comme dans les eaux de la Seine:
Repose avec sa Muse au creux de ce tombeau.
Mais quand nos vœux pourroient le placer pres des anges
En disant pour son ame un seul de *profundis;*
Passant, que feroit-il etant en Paradis!
Ou l'on n'est occupé qu' à chanter des louanges!

IMITATED.

Here lies Boileau, critic and rhimer;
Who ever knew a bard sublimer?
To him the streams of Hypocrene
Were as well known as those of Seine.
Should we by solemn litanies*
Uplift this poet to the skies,
What would he do the saints among
Where hymns of praise alone are sung?

* Solemn Litanies. These allude to the "Te de Profundis," which is sung in Roman Catholic chapels, to rescue the souls of the deceased from purgatory, and convey them to a place of eternal rest.

A WRONG GRACE BEFORE DINNER.

A friend of Boileau, who had been invited to a grand dinner by some rich Jews, wished very much to carry Boileau with him. The poet, at length, tired with his importunities, exclaimed, "What dine with a set of scoundrels, who crucified their lord and master!"—"My dear Sir," replied his Epicurean friend, "how could you put such things into my head at this time, when such an excellent dinner is just ready, and these honest people are now waiting for me?"

THE PLURALIST.

Boileau meeting a friend of his, who had of late accumulated a great many benefices upon himself, though he had frequently held long discourses with the poet on the danger which the pluralist brought on his eternal welfare. "Ha! Monsieur Abbé," said the bard, "how is this, what is become of your former protestations and terrible anathemas against holders of pluralities?"—"My dear friend," rejoined the hypocritical priest, "you cannot conceive how com-

fortable they make my life."—" I grant you they may make your life comfortable indeed, but think of your death, Monsieur Abbé, think of your death."

A GRAND COMPLIMENT.

Louis XIV. one day at court asked Boileau when he was born. " I reckon," says the poet very readily, " my birth-day as the most glorious circumstance of my life; I came into the world a day before your Majesty, which enabled me to record the brilliant actions of your reign."

EPIGRAM.

IN NOVUM CAUSIDICUM RUSTICI LICTORIS FILIUM.

Dum puer iste fero natus lictore perorat
Et clamat medio, stante parente, foro;
Quæris quid sileat circumfusa undique turba?
Non stupet ob natum, sed timet illa patrem.

IMITATED.

ON A YOUNG PLEADER, THE SON OF A COUNTRY BEADLE.

Whilst Plowden thus, his father standing by,
Fills the whole market with his bawling,

The crowd seems all alarm'd indeed, and
why?
From Plowden's tongue they do not fear
a mawling;
No! 'tis the tipstaff in the father's hand
That makes the audience at a distance stand.

EPIGRAM.

À CLIMENE.

Tout me fait peine,
Et depuis un jour
Je crois Climene
Que j'ai de l'amour.
Cette nouvelle
Vous met en courroux;
Tout beau, cruelle
Ce n'est pas pour vous.

IMITATED.

TO A HAUGHTY FAIR ONE.

Of late, fair Chloe, nought can please,
My heart has lost its former ease,
Too true I am in love;
At this confession I see now,
You toss your head and knit your brow,
Nay, Chloe, do not move,

Oh! tis not for yourself I wail,
But tender Fanny of the dale.

EPIGRAM.

CONTRE UN ATHÉE.

Alidor assis dans sa chaise,
Medisant du ciel à son aise,
Peut bien medire aussi de moi.
Je ris de ses discours frivoles:
On sait fort bien que ses paroles,
Ne sont pas articles de foi.

IMITATED.

AGAINST AN ATHEIST.

Whilst *Ponder* utters blasphemies
Against the ruler of the skies,
And, condescending, now makes free
Both with my writings and with me;
I laugh at all his harmless spite,
Let him talk on or let him write,
For who would trust this prating elf,
Who owns he knows no faith himself?

EPIGRAM.

ON A BAD POET WHO REVILED ME.

En vain par mille et mille outrages,
Mes ennemis dans leurs ouvrages,

Ont cru me rendre affreux aux yeux de
l'univers:
Cotin pour décrier mon style
A pris un chemin plus facile,
C'est de m'attribuer ses vers.

IMITATED.

In vain my enemies combine
To blast my reputation;
Whilst to their own works they confine
The efforts of their defamation:
But *Cotton* found the surest way
To rob me of my fame;
He writes bad verses ev'ry day,
And prints them in my name.

EPIGRAM.

PROOF POSITIVE.

Ton oncle dis-tu, l'assassin,
M'a guéri d'une maladie;
La preuve qu'il ne fut jamais mon médicin,
C'est que je suis encore en vie.

IMITATED.

Ah! boast no more your uncle's skill,
He never cur'd my recent ill,
His y art was how to kill;

What better proof can I advance,
I never us'd his pill or lance;
That he was never my physician,
What—but my present sound condition.

LE DEBITEUR RECONNOISSANT.

Je l'assistai dans l'indigence,
Il ne me rendit jamais rien;
Mais quoiqu'il me dût tout son bien,
Sans peine il souffroit ma présence:
O la rare reconnoissance!

IMITATED.

UNCOMMON GRATITUDE.

'Tis true I sav'd Jack from the jail,
Advanc'd him cash, and was his bail;
What, tho' he ne'er repaid the debt,
And owes me his subsistence yet,
Jack, with a most obsequious air,
Allows he can my presence bear;
No doubt Jack's feelings are endued
With a most wond'rous gratitude.

BON MOT.

Boileau's brother was a doctor and dean of Sens, and a man of considerable erudi-

tion; the playfulness* of his fancy led to compositions of a light and amusing nature. On subjects in conversation, though grave and important in their tendency, Dr. Boileau continually indulged his vein of pleasantry. The satiric poet used to say, "If my brother had not been created a doctor at the Sorbonne he would have taken his degree at the Italian comedy."

BON MOT.

When this eminent satirist was on his death bed, his friends were willing to inspire him with a degree of confidence in his recovery that the poet's feelings told him was groundless. He repeated the line in Malherbe:

"Je suis vaincu du tems, je céde à son outrage."

Time has prevail'd, I cannot but obey.

* Among many learned works in the line of his profession, James Boileau wrote a singular book, entitled, "Historia Flagellantium," which was published in a French translation, in 1701, 12mo. This tract too ludicrously described certain penalties inflicted on Roman Catholic sinners of both sexes.

L'Avocat's Dict.

During this period a person begged leave to read to him a new tragedy; the satirist listened to the two first scenes, and then exclaimed, "Why do you wish to hasten my end?"

CENSURE AND PRAISE.

It was a saying of Boileau that to be a good praiser it was necessary to be a good censor. The poet added, "who but a good critic can give just blame or praise, as such a province requires nicety of discrimination; moreover, a person who blames with very little consideration, risks only the hazard of being called too fastidious; but a reader who bestows his praises at random is treated by his opponent, without mercy, as a fool and a blockhead."

RHYME*.

Boileau, in his satire addressed to Moliere, wrote the following lines on the shackles of rhyme:

* Boileau, like all other French writers, was much indebted to rhyme. Our Dryden, more ingenuous, not only continually employed rhyme but faithfully praised the use of it on all occasions.

Maudi[illegible]
sensée,
Dans les bornes d'un vers renferma sa pen-
sée,
Et donnant à ses mots une etroite prison,
Voulut avec la rime enchaîner la raison.

IMITATED.

Curs'd be the man who first, with addled
brain,
By metre dar'd the pow'rs of wit restrain;
In verse imprison ev'ry thought sublime,
And, slave-like, hug the clanking chains of
rhyme.

LOVE*.

Boileau used frequently to assert in conversation, that the sorrows, complaints, miseries, joys, &c. of love, would afford the best materials for comedy, for that

* What the satirist has observed of love being a st
comedy, as it is generally treated, is true. Had m
vellists, both French and English, been aware of and
this sentiment of Boileau, the understandings of the s
part of their readers would not have been so often embarra
and disgusted with so much mawkish sentiment and s
luscious scenes so pompously and seriously displayed.

love was a passion would reduce its votaries of both sexes to a second state of infancy. He used to repeat some lines out of plays in which love had borne too much share; this recital he rendered more ludicrous by his infantine manner of pronouncing these amorous passages.

SINGULAR COMFORT.

Boileau one day met the servant of his friend who had been long and frequently afflicted with the gout. On enquiring how his master was (whom he knew to be of a quick temper), the valet replied, that his master was then under a fit of his old complaint. "He swears a good deal, then," observed the poet, "O yes, Sir," said the valet, with much simplicity, "it is the only comfort my poor master has in his illness."

END OF BOLÆANA.

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